India

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Experience of many "Indian Budget nights" in the House of Commons has taught us to be thankful for small mercies. It seems idle to expect Parliament to do its duty on these occasions. One can only compare one occasion with another, and express satisfaction if there are any signs of a less degree of culpable negligence than usual. Looking at the debate of yesterday week from this point of view, one is able to chronicle a marked improvement. The number of members in the House was decidedly larger than usual, a fact that is obviously connected with the earlier date at which the discussion was brought on. For this result thanks are due to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman who, at the instance of the Indian Parliamentary Committee, urged Mr. Balfour not to relegate the Budget to the last days of the Session. The discussion travelled over a wide field. But the most important topic was the proposal, made by Mr. Robinson Souttar and seconded by Sir William Wedderburn, for "a large and generous free grant" from the British Exchequer to the famine relief funds. It is scandalous that the proposal should have been rejected. But again, in view of previous performances, it is a matter for some satisfaction that the hostile majority was only 47 (112—65).

As will be seen from Mr. Souttar's speech, it became necessary to modify a phrase in the amendment of which he had given notice, no private member being able to submit a motion in Parliament for the appropriation of a specified sum of money. The reference to a grant of "not less than five millions sterling" was accordingly omitted, and the words "a large and generous free grant" substituted. The amendment in its revised form read as follows:—

That, looking to the special needs of the famine-stricken people in India at the present time, this House recognises that funds are urgently required to feed, clothe, and house the cultivators in their villages until their crops are ripe; to provide them with plough cattle, seed, and other requisites of cultivation; and to restore them to their normal economic condition; that these requirements cannot be adequately met from Indian revenues raised from the suffering Indian people, and within the necessarily restricted field of ordinary relief operations; that the funds subscribed by charity are altogether insufficient for these purposes: and this House is therefore of opinion that a large and generous free grant should be provided to assist in meeting this unprecedented calamity.

The division-list upon this amendment is extremely interesting. We give below the names of those members who voted in the minority in support of Mr. Souttar's proposal:—

Asquith, Rt. Hn. H. H.	Fitzmaurice, Lord E.	MacDonnell, Dr. M. A.
Austin, M.	Flynn, J. C.	Maclean, J. M.
Bainbridge, E.	Fowler, Rt. Hn. Sir H.	MacNeill, J. G. S.
Bayley, Thomas.	Goddard, D. F.	M'Leod, John.
Billson, Alfred.	Gourley, Sir E. T.	Maddison, F.
Burns, John.	Gurdon, Sir W. B.	Morton, E. J. C.
Burt, Thomas.	Harwood, George.	O'Brien, Patrick.
Caldwell, James.	Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. S.	O'Connor, T. P.
Causton, Richard K.	Healy, Maurice.	Pease, Joseph A.
Channing, F. A.	Healy, Timothy M.	Pickersgill, E. H.
Clark, Dr. G. B.	Humphreys-Owen, A. C.	Power, P. J.
Crilly, Daniel.		Provand, A. D.
Dalziel, J. H.	Jones, William.	Roberts, John H.
Donelan, Captain A.	Lambert, George.	Robson, W. S.
Doogan, P. C.	Lawson, Sir Wilfrid.	Samuel, J.
Duckworth, James.	Lough, Thomas.	Seely, Charles Hilton.
Emmott, Alfred.	MacAleese, Daniel.	Shaw, C. E.

Smith, Samuel.	Thomas, D. A.	Whittaker, T. P.
Soames, A. W.	Trevelyan, C. P.	Williams, J. Carvell.
Souttar, Robinson.	Ure, Alexander.	Wilson, Henry J.
Steadman, W. C.	Walton, Joseph.	Wilson, J. H.
Sullivan, Donal.	Wedderburn, Sir W.	Woods, Samuel.

It is to be noted that the "tellers" on each side were the official Whips—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. McArthur for the minority and Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther for the majority. That the Ministerial Whips should "tell" for the Government is quite in accordance with custom, although we are always assured that "Indian questions are not party questions." What is novel is that the Opposition Whips should "tell" for the minority. This course was taken by the Liberal leaders entirely on their own initiative, and indeed a three-line "whip," signed by Mr. Herbert Gladstone, was issued to Liberal members in anticipation of the debate.

Thus the Liberal party went out of its way to associate itself officially with the amendment independently drafted and proposed by the Indian Parliamentary Committee. The event marks a notable step in advance. And among those who actually voted with the minority were the following ex-Ministers: Mr. Asquith, Mr. Burt, Mr. Causton, Lord E. Fitzmaurice, Sir Henry Fowler, and Mr. Seale-Hayne. It follows that the Liberal Front Bench is definitely committed to the policy set forth in the amendment. At the same time we find that no Liberal member voted against the amendment. The minority also included two Unionists—Mr. C. H. Seely and the redoubtable Mr. Maclean.

To judge from the speeches delivered one would have expected many Unionist members to vote with the Indian Parliamentary Committee. But party discipline is strong in the party which is so fond of declaring that Indian questions are not party questions. The Unionist members who disapproved the policy of the Government made their protest, for the most part, by walking out of the House. Thus one looks in vain among the majority for the names of Sir Lewis McIver, Sir Andrew Scoble, Sir H. King, Colonel Milward, or any other member who has any special association with India. Those who know Sir M. Bhownaggree may be surprised—but then again they may not—that he had not the heart to vote for the proposal he supported. Perhaps even the party Whips might have forgiven him if he had for once subordinated the claims of party to the claims of his stricken countrymen. Upon the whole the division, if not satisfactory, suggests particular grounds for satisfaction. The Government's abnormal majority was reduced to forty-seven, and that too in spite of the absence of most of the Irish members, whose vote, if they had been present, would have gone with the Indian Parliamentary Committee. Upon the whole the belief which prevailed in the lobby at the conclusion of the debate is probably sound—that the grant is not so much refused as postponed. The belief is strengthened by the remarkable revolt of the Ministerial press which, almost with one accord, condemns the Government for its refusal of the Indian Parliamentary Committee's appeal.

The opinions of the British Press, which we regret that we have little space to quote to-day, are peculiarly worthy of the attention of our Indian friends. The Liberal Press may be said to be unanimously favourable to a grant, and there is a remarkably strong force of opinion to the same effect even in the Conservative Press. The *Times* took a clear day to meditate on the subject, and then (July 28) it opened its leader with the affirmation that "there never was a time when it was more imperative to make it clear that England's duty to India, any more than India's duty to England, is not to be measured by arithmetical and economical rules." Now was the time to recognise an

exception to the good rule of India's financial independence and responsibility; "yet the suggestion that a special grant in aid of India should be voted by Parliament to help our great Eastern Dependency through the present grievous trouble," the *Times* points out, "was successfully resisted on Thursday by the leader of the House of Commons and the party behind him." The *Times* declares its opinion, and supports it by argument, "that the case for a grant-in-aid to India under existing conditions is very strong." After speaking of the loyal demonstrations in India, our contemporary says:—

But when we welcome generous and uncalculating loyalty, it is unwise to put forward the Imperial Government in the character of Mr. Gradgrind. On strict financial principles Mr. Balfour and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach may be justified in refusing to accept any share of responsibility for the Imperial Government. But it is not on strict financial principles that the Princes and the peoples of India have acted when they have shown their sympathy with the British nation during the war, any more than our fellow-citizens in the colonies. When over six millions of the inhabitants of India are saved from starvation only by public relief, it is not too much to ask the Imperial taxpayer to subscribe liberally to help those who have so lately and so conspicuously shown their loyalty to the Crown of their sympathetic attachment to the Empire. A generous gift cannot impair the validity of the severest code of financial orthodoxy.

The very next morning after the Government had set their Whips to tell against the amendment, the *Standard* —staunchest of Government supporters—wrote:—

Even if the Mansion House were in a position to send several millions to be dispensed by the local charitable committees, the question would still remain whether the nation as a nation ought not to come to the rescue of India. The issue was raised in a precise form by Mr. Souttar's amendment last night, and we must own to much regret that the attitude of Ministers was discouraging, and that, on a division, the proposal was rejected by 112 to 65. It was left to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to offer a detailed defence of the ungracious course adopted. But Lord George Hamilton was of course unable to dissociate himself from the policy of the Cabinet. Yet the considerations advanced by the two statesmen will not be found generally convincing.

That India had a surplus last year and the year before, while Great Britain is faced by huge war liabilities, this, the *Standard* thinks, "will strike most people as special pleading." For, it goes on to say:—

It is not the relative condition of the finances of the two countries that is the criterion; but the relative wealth and prosperity of the respective populations. In spite of our deficit, we are waxing, as a community, rich; whereas the average Native of India, notwithstanding the neat appearance of the Calcutta account books, is exceptionally poor. What would be to us a small loss would mean to the rayat the disappearance of his margin of subsistence. Apart from the practical cogency of its claim to succour, India would welcome and value a grant from Imperial funds as a mark of national sympathy.

One does not envy the feelings of the Government under the combined lash of its two foremost supporters' contempt and disgust.

The *Observer* "trusts that the refusal of the Government will not be maintained," for "this is no time for financial pedantry" in the face of "a national duty." The *Daily Graphic*, referring to India's eager aid in South Africa and China, says "all this splendid help we have received with lip-gratitude, but when it is proposed that the nation should make a national gift to India in her sore distress the responsible Minister informs the world that 'India's borrowing powers are not yet exhausted.'" The *Daily Express* does "not hesitate to say that it is as important that we should help our people in India as that we should avenge our martyrs in China." The declaration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that nothing is to be done unless the outlook becomes much worse—"what in the world does he want, or does he expect? and what would the Native Press say about this amazing declaration?"— "his declaration, and the tone of his declaration," says the *Daily Express*, "really seem to show that he has utterly failed to understand the gravity of the situation in India." The *Birmingham Daily Post* does not discuss the grant, but urges that "in any case there should be no delay in transferring to the Indian account the £250,000 which the Commission on Indian finance has reported as being due from the Imperial funds." So, after all, the voice of India is getting a hearing, and even in Conservative strongholds it is making the cause of India very distinctly felt.

Lord George Hamilton told the House, in the course of his Budget Statement, that, when he went to the India Office first—some twenty-seven years ago—his admirable mentors were "great upon this":—

that the only hope of effective economy, the only hope of improving the financial system, was to make India independent and self-supporting.

Now, in point of fact, India has been, and is, "independent and self-supporting," and she is just as anxious to remain so as Lord George or his mentors could wish. She pays her way—and a good deal more. It is rather remarkable, then, that Lord George should use this pious argument in opposition to a free grant from the British Exchequer, not by way of dole, but in sympathetic recognition of the loyal feeling exhibited by India in a time not only of Imperial emergency but of domestic distress unparalleled. Such a grant would obviously not in any way infringe her "independent and self-supporting" position. Everybody knows that if India had a just voice in the direction of her own material and moral development, in the regulation of her own policy and therefore of her own expenditure, and in the employment of her own people in all positions for which they are competent, her finances would show very differently from what they do to-day.

Certain of the financial experts before the Currency Committee fell under the feeble ridicule of the Secretary of State. "The experts on this occasion who were opposed to our policy," said Lord George triumphantly, "all told us that we might be able to establish a gold standard by proclamation in India, but as to associating with that a gold currency or getting any amount of gold flowing into India it was an absurdity." He went on:—

The famine caused a great falling off in the export trade of India, war broke out in the Transvaal, the world was deprived of its largest source of gold supply, and in consequence of the war expenditure the price of money rose. If the Committee of which the right hon. gentleman (Sir Henry Fowler) was chairman could have foreseen that in the first year after they concluded their Report conditions so unfavourable to the realisation of a gold standard and currency in India would have existed, I think they would have wanted no action to be taken until a normal state of things had been re-established.

Sir Henry Fowler acknowledged that he was "sure that not one of the members of that Committee would have signed that Report and adopted so great a change if they had known that we should shortly be engaged in a war in South Africa and that India would be suffering from a terrible famine." "Yet," cried Lord George, gleefully, "there has been a superabundance of gold." Yes, eight and a-half millions! Let us see how the accumulation proceeds, and how the yellow metal overruns the country. And let us not forget that even this peddling—and so far obvious—success has been gained by keeping up taxation that ought to have been remitted, and by screwing up the rupee to an artificial value in exchange about 50 per cent. higher than it would reach on natural principles.

If the cost of military equipment has "almost escaped the control of the civilised world," it is a mad world indeed. The manufacture of arms and munitions of war "has become a profitable undertaking"—especially to firms that have friends in a Government. We are not aware that our Indian fellow-subjects have derived much profit from the business; on the contrary, they seem likely to incur considerable loss in consequence of the military equipment of China and the Boxers. Then they must pay for the supersession of Martinis by Enfields in the Native army, and that, too, in a year of unparalleled distress and of perfect peace throughout the country and along the borders. Yet let them take courage, for "the sums which have been paid by the British Government for the contingents to South Africa and China will to a very large extent cover the expenditure." So says Lord George Hamilton. For our own part, we are wholly unaware that the British Government has paid, or proposes to pay, a single rupee "for the contingents to South Africa and China." The British Government has promised to pay the ordinary and extraordinary expenses of these contingents while on service in South Africa and China on British work; but that is not paying "for the contingents." Of course the British Government ought to pay for the use of these troops, but it will not pay a stiver. If, as Lord George Hamilton says, the Indian Government runs a risk in allowing these troops out of the country, then the British Government ought to compensate it for such risk. If the risk were turned into a disaster, the Indian Govern-

ment would have to raise every pie of the expenditure from the miserable taxpayers of India. If, on the other hand, there is no risk—and there is none—India is permanently overburdened with the cost of these unnecessary troops.

On the North-West Frontier, Lord Curzon, says the Secretary of State, has pursued vigorously a twofold policy: the substitution of levies and local militia for British Indian troops, and withdrawal from cantonments outside the administrative frontier. We should like to know just where that "administrative frontier" lies. Anyhow the policy is satisfactory on the face of it. Lord Curzon's wild jingoism has been markedly toned down by experience, and now there may be reasonable hopes of peace in the North-West region. "Suggestions," says Lord George Hamilton, "have been made to the Indian Government to construct a railway down the Khaibar Pass and to place a British garrison at Khotal, but these views did not recommend themselves to Lord Curzon and myself." No; these lunatic "suggestions" would hardly fit in with the sane policy which the India Office first scouted and has now silently adopted. However, we must deal tenderly with repentant sinners, and hope they will persevere in their new course of righteous action. The Indian Government has indeed driven a railway up to Jamrud, which is in admittedly Indian territory; and even so that railway is regarded as a menace by the neighbouring tribes, while to run it through to Lundi Kotal would not only fire the heather along the Pass, but set the Amír a-thinking. A period of peace on the frontier would soon relieve the financial difficulties, and make a mere bagatelle of the adequate equipment of the Native troops.

An accidental remark of Lord George Hamilton's seems worth some little attention—a remark about the monsoon. He said:—

> In recent years the Meteorological Department have established a direct connexion between the fall of rain in India and the height of the Nile flood in Egypt. For the last 20 years, where there has been a failure of rain in India, the Nile flood has been low. Last year the flood was one of the lowest on record, and the failure of the monsoon was exceptionally bad. This year the Nile flood was normal, and that inspires the hope that ultimately the monsoon would fulfil its normal course.

Now what controls the Nile flood? The rains in Central Africa, we suppose. And what controls the rains in Central Africa? Materially, at all events, the vast expanses of forest. Suppose now that the progress of "civilisation" in Central Africa involves, as it seems to do elsewhere, the demolition or reckless thinning of the forests, what follows? Egypt may protect herself pretty well by an extended system of barrages and canals. But what of India? Shall India be reduced to a literal desert? We should be glad to see this question worked out by experts.

Sir Edgar Vincent constituted himself the awful example of the purely financial expert posing as statesman. He scouted the idea that India is overtaxed or misgoverned. "His conviction was that the only right course is for the Government to make the finances strong and to let them appear strong;" and he would provide for famine by "an effective and bold public reserve." Well, really, the Government has laboured very hard indeed "to make" the finances strong; it has actually taken the rupee, value say 10d., and fixed it up rigidly at a minimum of 16d. It is great at the construction of men in buckram. How is Sir Edgar to erect his sufficient "reserve"? Well, "if you look at recent surpluses and at the commerce, he sees no sign of diminution of resources." No; any man that has a bag of gold containing several thousands can go on paying out one, two, three, say ten, thousands without any sign of diminution of resources, but eventually he comes to his last thousand, and then where is he? Sir Edgar does not see the whole game. He does not see that the recent surpluses were wholly fictitious, or that the expended commerce is really drain and not natural prosperity. Where, then, is he to get his "reserve"? How can he imagine that the Government of India would be in such financial difficulties if it could clear its way on any terms and establish a reserve? The country is reduced to the last stages of exhaustion, and what is wanted is above all things a capable administration on the lines of a sound policy. The last financial card has been played.

The letters which have appeared in the *Times of India* on the measures taken to collect revenue in some of the famine-stricken districts in Gujerat have produced a reply from Mr. Monteath, Chief Secretary to Government in the Famine Department. Unfortunately it takes the form of a refusal to notice anonymous communications, a reply which our contemporary declares itself unable to read without regret. The *Times of India* goes on to say:—

> The right attitude of an administration in regard to allegations made in the public press is one of discrimination, not of unenquiring indifference or disbelief. If the Government resolve to pay heed to no complaint that is made to them through other than strictly conventional channels, then it is certain that of many things that happen in the Presidency to the detriment of the commonweal they will learn nothing. It is a strange conception of the character and capacity of an average village community which assumes that every person in it—or even any large proportion of its constituents—who suffers wrong at the hands of the subordinate officers of Government—is able and willing to appeal to Cæsar, and in the one way that Cæsar has prescribed.

When it suits the Government and their supporters they are ready enough to talk of the "dumb millions"; and equally ready when it suits to expect them to cease to be dumb.

But, as the *Times of India* points out, this plea that anonymous communications need no answer, does not really touch the present case; for the letters which are thus airily disposed of appeared in a journal of high character, well-known as a devoted supporter of the Government. That journal takes the responsibility for the good faith of its correspondents. It adds:—

> We take it that there could be no better way of helping Government at a time like this than by indicating to them the directions in which there have been departures from the beneficent lines of action which, we know, they are anxious to follow. No one knows better than they do that the spirit of indulgence which they wish to infuse into their revenue policy has not been infused into all their subordinates.

Things are not always made comfortable for those who denounce official errors, and there may thus be reasons why those who make complaints hide their identity.

Nor is there more substance in Mr. Monteath's argument that the allegations published by the *Times of India* are wanting in details and therefore cannot be answered. Talukas and even villages are mentioned by name. In one communication, coming as the *Times of India* vouches from a large landowner in the Broach district, the conduct of the revenue officers in the villages of Kadrama, Bhodal and Umracchi is denounced, as we mentioned in our last issue, they having turned defaulters out of their houses and prevented them from returning by fixing iron bars on the doors. Surely there is no want of particularity here, and it is absurd to refuse to answer the charges on this pretence.

On the other hand, the *Times of India* notices that the Bombay Government are showing signs of recognising the need for remissions. An explanatory note on previous orders declares that notices are only to be issued to those *prima facie* able to pay their assessments, while others should be regarded as unable to pay and should be so informed. Where the Commissioner believes the occupant will not be able to pay for several years, remission is to be granted. Moreover, no one is to be so pressed as to be forced to borrow. Our contemporary points out many points in which the intentions of the Government may be defeated. For instance, moneylenders to avoid forfeiture of the land which is their security, are paying the assessments, but what they pay is, of course, added to the indebtedness of their debtors.

The *Pioneer* devotes a long article to the separation of Judicial and Executive Functions. This it decides is neither necessary nor, in view of the financial situation, practicable, but it is inclined to think it desirable. In particular, it makes light of one of the arguments of the supporters of the present system, that the prestige of the District Officer would suffer by the change.

> This prestige must rest on some foundation. If that foundation is the feeling abroad that the man who institutes the prosecution has the power to secure a conviction, then it is clear that reform is urgently required.

The *Pioneer* mentions a prevalent belief that the younger and more educated subordinate officers are in favour of the separation, and while unable to vouch for the fact admits that if that is so it affords a powerful argument for reform.

PARLIAMENT AND THE NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION.

THE debate on Mr. Souttar's Amendment will be read in India with somewhat mixed feelings. There were not wanting many good omens. The very date was propitious; for though it was late in the Session, it was better than in previous years, when the very last day was set aside for the consideration of the affairs of our greatest dependency. Again, the proposed free grant received support from many quarters where support could hardly have been expected. Liberals of the most diverse types were found to favour it from Sir William Wedderburn and Mr. Samuel Smith, to Mr. Joseph Walton and Sir Henry Fowler, while on the Conservative side among those who spoke for it were not only a man so prone to independent action as Mr. Maclean, but even a steady party man like Colonel Milward. Nor must the support of the two chief Government organs in the Press—the *Times* and the *Standard*—be overlooked. The division list, too, was well enough; for in the present Parliament forty-seven is but a modest Government majority. That it was not even less, is due to party pressure; for the Government Whips told on one side, and the Opposition Whips on the other. This is, indeed, a crucial instance of the hollowness of the claim, urged alike by Lord George Hamilton and Sir Henry Fowler, that Indian questions should be kept out of the arena of party strife—a claim which in practice amounts to this, that the Government of the day is never to be opposed on Indian questions by the Opposition, however much its action may be antagonistic to all the principles which the Opposition professes to uphold. When, however, members on the Government side of the House begin to take the advice seriously, and to treat Indian affairs as outside the bounds of party allegiance, then at once the party screw is applied, the Government Whips tell as in the most ordinary party question, and independence is treated as revolt.

By a wise rule none but Ministers who are responsible to the country at large may propose in the House of Commons to make a grant of any definite sum of money, and therefore Mr. Souttar, though he made no secret that he thought £5,000,000 would be a proper amount, was obliged to move his amendment in general terms. He and many subsequent speakers defended a grant on four different but closely connected grounds—generosity, pride, policy, and justice. The people of India were starving, untold miseries awaited them in the immediate future, if the monsoon failed. Even if it did not fail, the suffering must still be intense, and the country itself was too poor to respond. Where, then, should it look in its poverty, but to England, the richest nation of the world? But if compassion and generosity are left on one side, could the Mother State of the Empire allow India to suffer thus? Could her pride bear the scorn of other nations, feeding on this well-spring of misery, which gives the lie to all her boasts of Imperial happiness and prosperity? And what impolicy to leave India in her misery sinking lower and lower, unable to recover from her great calamity, because at the moment of her direst need sufficient help was not at hand. Nor is it sound policy to let slip so golden an opportunity of winning the hearts of the people. Mr. Souttar expressed his conviction that the natives of India were the most grateful people on earth:—

> If we only rose to the occasion and gave this grant, which we should never miss, we should make India loyal for half a century. Fathers would tell their sons of the time when famine and pestilence stalked through the land, when seed corn was consumed and cattle perished, and nothing remained for the people but death, when the Government came forward with the help that saved the lives of the people and restored happiness and contentment throughout the land.

It is a fine picture, but it almost seems as if the rulers of this great country have determined that it is never to come to pass. The father is to tell his son, not how England saved India, but how she left her to perish or to live as her own efforts might allow; how men from America and from Germany were struck with the sorrows of the people and with no bond but their common humanity came forward to help the suffering, and how England, which had taken the destinies of India into her hands, was satisfied to be represented in the work of mercy, like America and Germany, by the efforts of a few generous private citizens, and as a nation turned aside from the act of national justice.

For in its essence the national succour of the starving Indians is not only an act of generosity and of prudence, but an act of justice. As Mr. Souttar said,

> India had cost us nothing in the past. Our colonies had cost us hundreds of millions, but our Indian Empire was founded, extended, and consolidated from Indian resources; the English taxpayer was never asked to pay a shilling for an Indian purpose.

And then he pointed the contrast between India and the Colonies—the latter free of the cost of the Colonial Office and contributing the magnificent sum of one and a-half million sterling towards Imperial defence, while India even paid Lord George Hamilton's salary, and contributed in her poverty twenty to twenty-five millions per annum.

> Beyond that India had borne the expense of many wars to which colonists had contributed not a shilling; our rich colonists had been spared, but the poorest and most miserable peasantry in the world had been taxed, not for their own welfare merely, but for the preservation of the name and fame of the British Empire in portions of two continents.

Such were the arguments of the supporters of the amendment. The case against it had already in some measure been put forward by the Secretary of State for India, but fell chiefly to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Lord of the Treasury. Their arguments may be summed up under three heads: (1) that England was poor and her resources already strained to the utmost; (2) that India had not asked and did not need help from the English Treasury; and (3) that if such help were given it would interfere with the financial independence of India.

It may seem strange that, in speaking of England and India, the burdens of the latter should be the uppermost thought; yet in these days, when the glories and advantages of Empire are so much vaunted, there is something refreshing in the straightforward remark of Sir Michael Hicks Beach that the Imperial Exchequer is really the Exchequer of the United Kingdom, and still more in the words of Mr. Balfour, who said:—

> But the Empire as a whole is run by these islands, and if you are going, in addition to that responsibility, to say that whenever a calamity occurs in any part of that Empire the responsibility is also to fall upon the taxpayer of these islands, you are rushing into financial responsibilities of which you may have in a very few years great reason to repent.

Mr. Balfour groaned at the increase of expenditure. Should he not rather have groaned at the increase of responsibilities which oblige this country—the richest in the world—to plead poverty and impotence when millions, the ordering of whose affairs she has taken into her hands, are being decimated by pestilence and famine?

Compared with the outspokenness of this argument, the next which was used against the grant seems miserably insincere. To say that India does not need and has not asked help, is to confuse the Indian Government, which is our creature, with the Indian people. Nor is it any answer to say that borrowing powers still exist and that while India can borrow there is no need to aid. It is true that Parliament has authorised a loan of ten millions, not for famine relief, but for public works, etc., and that only one million of this has yet been issued. Lord George Hamilton, as his contribution to the solace of Indian distress, proposes the issue of three millions more. As the *Times of India*, one of the chief Anglo-Indian newspapers, usually a firm supporter of the Government, puts it: "The help that the Imperial Government intend to offer India is a limited permission to help herself." India, being entitled to borrow for another purpose, is to be refused all help until these borrowing powers, transferred to the relief of famine, have been exhausted. This at all events is the logical outcome of the argument, but the Government, to add the last touch of absurdity, suggest that three millions should be borrowed out of a possible nine, and if the three million loan is not enough, then the British Exchequer may help.

But the real reason for refusing a grant seems to have been of another character. It was the preservation of "the financial independence of India." Sir Michael Hicks Beach and Mr. Balfour spoke of that independence as the only safeguard of economy in India. But what is the real spring of the opposition to the grant among Indian officials? A fear that they, for expenditure rests in official hands, will then spend too much? Or a fear that their wings will be clipped by the House of Commons? If England pays, England must have a voice in the spending. If a serious deficit in India has to be made good here, then the House of Commons will have to watch narrowly the finances of India. Will this be a new incentive to extravagance, or a new guarantee for moderation?

THE "INDIAN BUDGET DEBATE."

THE main interest in the so-called "debate on the Indian Budget" lay in the keen discussion of the question of a free National grant in sympathy with our sorely stricken fellow-subjects in the famine-ravaged districts of India. With this melancholy subject we have dealt in the preceding article. For the rest, we have the usual generalities and futilities of Lord George Hamilton and some independent comments by Sir Henry Fowler and Mr. Maclean. The most valuable parts of Sir Henry Fowler's comments, apart from his strenuous support of the demand for a national free grant, lies in his criticisms on the Majority Report of the Indian Expenditure Commission.

The treatment of the figures of the Budget by the Secretary of State was simply a repetition of the ridiculous farce which has become too painful even for ridicule; and it is enough to drive sensible Indians to despair when Sir Henry Fowler declares himself "struck by the pathos, eloquence, and voluminous exposition of detail which has characterised his masterly speech." If this speech really "will take the foremost place among the statements of Indian finance that have been made to the House," what a beggarly array, indeed, have we to contemplate! There was no analysis whatever to show how the revenue is built up, no exposition of the economic basis of the various groups of income, not a syllable of investigation of the capacity of the agriculturists—four-fifths of the nation—to contribute the quota exacted from them, not a word to justify or to explain the cutting down of expenditure for any purpose in any department, no marshalling of the vitalities of the country for steady development on sound lines of economy—nothing but an empty expression of Lord George Hamilton's belief "that as soon as this cloud passes we shall be able to make considerable remissions of taxation and so to improve and ameliorate the general condition of the taxpayers." Anyone that is satisfied with such an account of our year's stewardship in India must have an amazing confidence in the sustaining qualities of the East wind.

The anticipated surplus of £160,000 has gone by the board. We have already shown how utterly artificial that surplus was from the day of its construction. Still it stood forward to deceive people until eight days before this Budget Debate, when the revised estimate came over in the smaller figures of £50,000. But seven days later, and just in time for the Indian Secretary's statement, came a telegram from the Viceroy, "in which," said Lord George Hamilton, "he stated that, after consulting with the Finance Department, he had come to the conclusion that it would be necessary to provide for an additional £1,200,000 for famine relief and the remission of land revenues." "So that, instead of a surplus of £160,000, a deficit of £826,000 is now contemplated." Such are the lively variations of official estimates. But does any rational mortal imagine that the Government of India has touched bottom at £826,000 deficit? Even if the monsoon come on vigorously and obviate "a second consecutive year of famine" in Western India, how is the Government going to get its ordinary tale of land revenue out of the starving, naked, practically bankrupt rayats, whom the House has for the present abandoned to their fate? At the same time, Lord George Hamilton tells us that, though the Forward Policy is being steadily and carefully dropped, yet, in consequence of the necessity of providing the Native army with more modern weapons, he "can hold out no hope whatever of a reduction of military expenditure"; nay, he rather anticipates some slight increase. And last week our Bombay Correspondent, with special means of accurate knowledge, drew attention to the fact that "the cotton industry is in as bad a plight as could be imagined" in consequence of the outbreak in China, "for nine-tenths of the yarn produced in Indian factories finds its way to China." No wonder the Secretary of State declined a fair and full survey of the condition of India in relation to his surplus and his deficit—and the woes to come. Sir Henry Fowler cited statistics of the trade of India, not, indeed, in this connexion, but in illustration of the success of the currency experiments. But he did not point the moral of the appalling excess of exports over imports, or even frame his statement in such a form as to suggest the sharpness of the contrast. The very figures of trade movements imply a startling warning. Lord George says he feels "that a sound system of finance depends upon the development of the material and industrial products of the country." But his feeling matters very little; he had better get out his electricity.

When Lord George looked forward to that halcyon season, after the storm and stress of famine, when "we shall be able to make considerable remissions of taxation and so to improve and ameliorate the general condition of the taxpayers," he guarded his hopes by a condition. That condition was: "fair treatment by the Imperial Treasury as regards the apportionment of the charges in which the two Exchequers have a common interest." But a strong man at the India Office would not have allowed this question to be suspended for a decade; a strong Indian Secretary would have compelled a just settlement of accounts. Now that the Majority Report has conceded the sum of £293,000 to India, and the authorities have somehow discovered that it ought to be only £257,000, Lord George pours out the vocabulary of laudation upon the Commission, and is mightily gratified with his pittance of a quarter of a million. What would a quarter of a million matter one way or the other to India, if only India were governed and administered in such fashion as to conserve her strength and to call out all her energies? Why, India, instead of being the poorest and most wretched country on the earth, might be a land flowing with milk and honey. But, in the narrow vision of the present Secretary of State, a quarter of a million is enough to hinge the amelioration of the taxpayers upon. Sir Henry Fowler, to his credit, struck out not a few important divergences from the India Office optimism, although he did fish on the other side of the water as well. He thinks the Commission, though the Report will "for many years to come" be "an authorised text-book" of Indian finance, yet were "very timid in their recommendations." He insists that the Comptroller and Auditor-General in India should occupy the like position with the analogous official at home, and "be absolutely independent of the Executive." He would strengthen the Finance Minister's position by removal of the Commander-in-Chief from the Viceroy's Council, again on the analogy of the home system. He succumbs, however, to the sophistry of the Commission on the estimation of the debt, forgetting that debt is not productive merely because it is so labelled in the accounts and expended on works that ought to be productive but are very heavily unproductive. His theory of the national assets continues to be amazing, and we do not doubt that a committee of the most competent financial men in the City of London would place the debt of India at fifteen times more than Sir Henry does. But on the military charges he recovers himself, especially on the excessiveness of the capitation charge.

"The question of exchange," says the Secretary of State, "is indeed the key of the situation." We confess we should like to get hold of that key. Where is it? And how does it work? It has disappeared from the accounts, and indeed we had imagined it had disappeared from sight altogether. The "gold standard associated with a limited gold currency," we are told, has proved a "singular success." Lord George rolls out the progress of it in crores and lakhs, and Sir Henry calculates that the aggregate of gold under the control of the Secretary of State was on March 7 eight millions and a-half. Well, surely that is not beyond the humblest of expectations; that is hardly a sum to throw the Finance Minister of an Empire into ecstasies. Sir Henry Fowler pointed out that "the people are still pursuing the old habits of trade, and that the report of the Committee that the great bulk of the internal transactions of India would continue to be carried on in silver is being borne out, and the quantity of gold circulated is equally small." Lord George halloos before he is out of the wood. The gain, according to Sir Henry, "is in the fixity of exchange between this country and India, and estimating the cost of a common denomination;" and he hopes that "this great change which has marked the administration of the noble lord will act most beneficially on the trade, commerce, taxation, and prosperity of India." If hopes would do it, we should all hope fervently. But there still remains the question, What has become of the Exchange? The fixity of fifteen rupees to the pound is convenient, and the common denomination is convenient—on this side. But how is such convenience to "act most beneficially on the trade, commerce, taxation, and prosperity of India"? Was the fluctuation of exchange or

the worry of Rx. and £ symbols any practical bar to the course of trade and commerce? Will the abolition of exchange and Rx. mitigate or not mitigate the taxation of the Indian taxpayer? Is not every rupee of exchange still extracted from the Indian taxpayer, although the operation is performed under an anæsthetic? The ostrich is really too big for concealment by hiding his head in the sand.

For all this clever legerdemain, the Secretary of State is not quite comfortable. Jaunty as he professes to be, he knows that there is riding behind him that dread horseman, Black Care. O yes, "we have made enormous changes in India during the last ten years"; "our Government is stronger and more solidified"; "the material prosperity of a large section of the population has greatly increased" (presumably the money-lenders and the big traders, chiefly European); and "our mechanism of government" has been improved into "the most advanced and scientific system that India has ever possessed." What then? "Yet," acknowledges Lord George Hamilton, "sometimes I have doubts whether our popularity has increased." Nobody else has any doubts: our popularity has certainly not increased. If the Indians came over here and rode roughshod over all our traditional ways and looked down upon us collectively and individually, is it to be supposed that they would become increasingly popular? No: that would be rather against human nature. But there is no reason whatever why we should not become increasingly popular in India, if we would but frankly fulfil our magnanimous promises to the people, and allow them to develop in every line of progress according to their individual capacities. Otherwise, that Black Care will steadily grow blacker still.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

Westminster, Thursday.

"IS history," asked Mr. Souttar, in his eloquent speech in the Indian Budget debate, "to record that the most terrible famine of the century was allowed to eat its way through the Indian people, without help from the Legislature of the greatest and richest Empire the world has ever seen?" The House of Commons, by 112 votes to 65, replied in the affirmative. In justice to members, however, it should be admitted that not many of them heard the question. Except for the purposes of the division lobby they might as well have been in Scotland waiting for the advent of the Twelfth. To appreciate, indeed, the absurdity of the rule which prohibits voting by proxy in Parliament you only require to see the House of Commons on an Indian Budget night. On one side of the Speaker's chair you may be able to count as many as twenty members, on the other side from ten to fifteen. From beginning to end of the debate you enjoy an almost uninterrupted view of the furniture; the benches display vast unbroken expanses of green leather; and the empty space rings with an echo, which you may interpret according to your fancy as a sympathetic obligato or as a mournful protest against the orator who refuses to the wilderness its appropriate silence. During the greater part of Lord George Hamilton's speech last Thursday the Front Opposition bench had Sir Henry Fowler as its sole occupant. Mr. Balfour stuck to the Treasury bench with heroic endurance for nearly half-an-hour, at the end of which period, having completed his letter-writing, he withdrew on tip-toe.

If members would only take stock of the Strangers' Gallery on an Indian night they might be less eager to desert the post of duty. Last week for example the benches above the clock showed row upon row of Eastern faces, with bright eyes fixed wonderingly on the nakedness of the land below. But when the gorgeous headdress of the Gaekwar of Baroda had disappeared from view the House of Commons seemed to feel that the eye of India had also been withdrawn. The distinguished visitor was for a time the cynosure of the assembly. Seated in the Diplomatic Gallery he was initiated into the mysteries of the place by young Mr. Gully, the Speaker's son and secretary, and in the course of the evening was visited in his place of observation by many old friends, members of both Houses. His Highness, however, soon tired of the Parliamentary show.

Without entering into the details of the debate it will be sufficient to state here that no part of the Minister's statement was more warmly applauded than that in which he paid a tribute to the amazing and pathetic patience, the silent endurance, and the consistent orderliness of the millions who inhabit the vast territory which has for so long been devastated by famine and pestilence. On the other hand, impatience was at no point more clearly manifested than when the noble lord was expanding, as an answer to the demand for an Imperial grant, his views as to the necessity of maintaining the equilibrium of expenditure and revenue. This precious phrase was resented as the veriest mockery of economic pedantry. Lord George Hamilton himself virtually admitted that it was a sham, for almost in the same breath he repeated the tiresome and inconsistent formula that if it should become necessary the Indian Government would not hesitate to appeal to the Imperial Treasury. Moreover, the Indian Government, apparently with scant regard for the equilibrium of expenditure and revenue, claims to have expended within the last two years upwards of £13,000,000 in connexion with the famine. "And," said Lord George Hamilton, "I am about to borrow £3,000,000 more."

Auditors of the speech were astonished to learn from Sir Henry Fowler that they had been listening to one of the ablest statements on Indian finance ever delivered in Parliament. Sir Henry's own contribution to the debate better deserved, in at least one portion of it, the glowing epithets which he showered with so profuse a generosity on Lord George Hamilton's too laboured effort. Sympathy and sentiment, the right hon. gentleman eloquently pleaded, were strong forces in human affairs. To vote a grant to India would be not merely a generous act but one of the wisest things that the British Government could do. This weighty plea for the wisdom of charity prepared the way for the motion, moved by Mr. Souttar and seconded by Sir William Wedderburn, in which Parliament was asked to make a grant of not less than £5,000,000 to assist the famine-stricken people. After this came the remarkable deliverance in which Sir M. Hicks Beach, according to Mr. Maclean, let the Ministerial cat out of the bag. Sir Michael's object seemed to be to prove that India was really in a better position financially than England, that already in consequence of the temporary reduction of the Indian garrisons, owing to the drafts made upon them on account of our military operations in South Africa and China, she was receiving relief to the extent of £3,000,000, and that in any case there was no need of charity, since the responsible officials had intimated that assistance was not required. To many members this speech must have come as a revelation.

There were some, however, whose suspicions it simply served to confirm. Among the shrewd minority was Mr. Maclean, who had interrupted his honeymoon—much to the concern of the official ring—in order to be present and give expression to his sentiments. That those were of a bold and uncompromising nature need scarcely be said. The Government were loudly accused of having given Lord Curzon a plain hint not to appeal to the Imperial Treasury for money and were at the same time held up to the reprobation of Parliament for circularising Europe and Asia with begging letters. Although expressed in milder form the views of the member for Cardiff found substantial support in the speeches of other Conservative members. With the exception, indeed, of Lord George Hamilton, Sir M. Hicks Beach, and Mr. Balfour, all who spoke pleaded in favour of the proposed grant. Among the ineptitudes for which the First Lord of the Treasury made himself responsible one in particular deserves to be treasured. "A precedent of the kind suggested," he urged, "ought not to be set up except in a case of extreme necessity." Party loyalty survived the strain even of this axiom and yielded the Government a sufficient if diminished majority.

As late as last Monday the Chancellor of the Exchequer, taking his cue from Mr. Brodrick, reiterated his firm belief in the reports of the Pekin massacres. Cabinet Ministers, however, are neither omniscient nor infallible. A few hours later a telegram arrived stating that a letter had been received from Sir Claude Macdonald which showed conclusively that the British Legation was standing less than a fortnight ago, and that Sir Claude and his staff were still unharmed though invested by a hostile army. Some singular replies to questions which had been given by Mr. Brodrick on the subject of the general command of the allied forces, had encouraged a suspicion that this problem is causing considerable friction. The British Government have now announced that General Gaselee

is about to advance on Pekin forthwith, and although a hope is expressed that his enterprise may be supported by the co-operation of the allied forces it seems to be clearly understood that the initiation of the movement is an isolated act on the part of her Majesty's Government. Example being better than precept, the other Powers will probably follow suit and leave the question of the command to settle itself.

Lord Wemyss found an unexpected and influential ally in Lord Rosebery in his attack on Lord Salisbury the other night. The venerable doyen of the cross-benches had had the temerity to remind the Prime Minister of his alarmist speech to the Primrose League last May, and aggravated that offence by lecturing the Government on their failure to take precautions against an invasion. On the authority of an unnamed foreign military attaché, the trembling peers were warned to beware the month of November. "November!" exclaimed the scoffing Premier, "I suppose the noble earl is thinking of the shooting stars of which we have usually so fine a collection in that month." Not all of Lord Salisbury's speech, however, was couched in this vein of genial cynicism. He raged furiously against the indiscretions of his critic, and assured the House that the horrors depicted in his own speech of last May were merely intended as a gentle reminder to the country of the changing conditions of modern life. "The poor, dear soul meant nothing of this," as one of Lord Byron's friends wrote on the margin of one of the poet's characteristic diatribes. Lord Rosebery seemed to be acutely disappointed by the Premier's disclaimer, and invented a new apothegm to suit the emergency. "Unhappy is the country," he cried, "that depends for its security on its past history."

Following fast on the terrible news of the assassination of the King of Italy last Sunday came the intelligence of the sudden death of a member of our own Royal family, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, better known in this country as the Duke of Edinburgh. The two events were so closely associated in point of time that on the same day that a resolution of sympathy with the people of Italy was adopted by Parliament, Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour had to perform the melancholy duty of giving notice of a similar resolution expressing the condolences of the two Houses with the Queen on the loss of her second son and the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg on the death of her husband.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

THE FAMINE AND REMISSIONS OF REVENUE.

[From an Indian Correspondent.]

Bombay, July 13.

In the midst of the very winter of our depression it is somewhat cheering to have to report a fair rainfall almost all over the country. It is to be hoped that this rain may prove adequate for the poor cultivators, especially those of Gujerat, who have suffered beyond measure during the last nine months. Of course, it is premature to say how the monsoon may ultimately turn out over the greater part of the peninsula.

Lord Northcote's Government has been prompt in its reply to the recent Memorial of the Presidency Association touching the imperative urgency of granting large remissions of current year's land revenue to the rayats in the affected parts. On the whole the Bombay Government is in accord with the views of the Association, but it does not see its way to make remissions indiscriminately. The reply so far is somewhat unsatisfactory. Mr. Monteath is of opinion that remissions should not be allowed to those who are fully able to pay. This is so self-evident a proposition that it is somewhat astonishing to think Mr. Monteath could have seriously meant to enlighten the public on the point, unless he seeks to avoid the real issue. No ghost was required to inform us that Government should not assist those who are able to assist themselves. On the face of the Memorial, the prayer referred to only that large majority of rayats, to be counted by the hundred thousand, who are utterly helpless and already deep in debt—rayats who have lost all, including their only capital, the agricultural cattle. Surely the Association did not put forth all its elaborate arguments and its statistical facts with a view to appealing to Government to help the well-to-do, or to give any encouragement to the fraudulent. The Association's main argument or plea was identical with the one urged by enlightened publicists and echoed by the entire Indian community of the Presidency, namely, that this was not the time to discriminate, evidently meaning discrimination between the utterly destitute and the comparatively destitute. To do so would be mischievous for very good reasons. After all it is neither the Commissioner, nor the Collector, nor his assistant who has to deal with this matter of remissions. Those who have to deal at first hand are the patels and the village officers —a class of ill-paid men who are seldom above temptation. Is it possible that they would act fairly by the thousands of indigent applicants? There can be only one answer to the query. If, then, partiality is to be exercised, is it not reasonable to infer that those who cannot please these village officers will be reported to their immediate superior as undeserving of any remission? Practically, discrimination would signify corruption. Is that a state of things desirable at this juncture? Is it desirable to have demoralisation among these revenue underlings with the added evil of injustice to the deserving? The benevolent object of the Government would be frustrated. Yet this is what the Government of Lord Northcote will get done, when it talks, though not wisely, of exercising discrimination. It is much to be feared that Mr. Monteath yet fails to perceive not only the hollowness of his own arguments but the grave evil arising therefrom. The fact is that the Bombay public have requested the local Government to swallow the bitter pill of liberal remissions; and the revenue authorities find it hard to swallow it. It goes against the grain; it goes to upset their cherished traditions. It means the efficacy and potency of public opinion which the omnipotent bureaucracy so vainly tries to ignore. However, this time the Nemesis of events is working its own good in spite of our earthly providences of the hour.

And so I leave this subject, fully convinced that the Government must unbend to circumstances. Lord Northcote has already declared himself in favour of ascertaining popular wishes and popular sentiments, and we may therefore fully hope that, untramelled as he is with the prejudices and the bias of the governing class of white Brahmins here, and trained as he is to the free public life of England, he will carry out the line of administrative conduct he has publicly prescribed for himself, and cordially invite the public to co-operate with him.

Next, I must refer to a letter which appeared in the beginning of the week in the columns of the *Times of India* from the pen of Mr. Monteath, the Chief Secretary to the Bombay Government, who is in special charge of famine operations. Last week I mentioned the startling correspondence of one gentleman signing himself "Gujerati," regarding the way in which in some talukas of Surat revenue collections were realised. This letter, following on the heels of another in the same journal, greatly exercised this famine authority. Instead of carefully investigating the truth of the statements made by the correspondent, he fell foul of him because he chose to write anonymously. Anonymity for a non-official is an unpardonable sin in the eye of the Chief Secretary, who forgets that almost every week officials inspire articles in many an official organ in the country. When officials thus endeavour to give expression to their views they are not anonymous. No. It is only when non-officials relate facts which are distasteful to the official bureaucracy that anonymity must be condemned, though I am not aware that non-official anonymity which panegyrises official acts has received the same condemnation. But these are the ways of the heaven-born members of that service which loves to call itself distinguished. Mr. Monteath's letter, I need not say, was most unwise. The *Times of India* was obliged to criticise it in the only way possible.

This famine has exposed many a serious defect in the land revenue administration of the Presidency. It is beginning to be seen, even by those who were once sceptics, that the time has come for a thorough overhauling of the land revenue policy of the Government. A small but independent committee of experts is needed for the purpose. It is to be hoped that public opinion will make itself heard on this all-important subject. A radical change would have the effect of ameliorating the condition of the rayat. Not that thereby his poverty would be entirely removed. That cannot be. He will share with the rest of the country the general poverty from which India is suffering—I mean the poverty that is the lamentable result of the immense and incessant drain of the national wealth which has been going on for over a century. The root of India's poverty lies in that economic drain. India never can be prosperous till that bleeding is stopped and a healthy circulation is again stimulated. Official apologists may do their best to conceal this canker which has been eating away the vitals of the people; but the canker is, thanks to the Nemesis of events, slowly and steadily exposing itself. In this lies India's future hope.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

6,266,000 ON RELIEF.

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Viceroy, dated July 28, 1900:—

"Considerable anxiety is felt owing to weakness of monsoon. Situation is serious and critical in Gujerat, Baroda, Rajputana (West), which are unsown, and no fodder of any description available. In South-Western Punjab sown crops are in imminent danger, because rains continue to hold off; fodder is very scarce, and cattle dying. In Central Provinces, Berar, Hyderabad, good crops will be secured if monsoon improves, but not otherwise. Latest reports show death-rate in Central Provinces not much in excess of the normal death-rate. In Gujerat conditions continue very unfavourable to health, though one-fourth of the inhabitants are on State relief.

"Numbers of persons in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 1,540,000; Punjab, 177,000; Central Provinces, 2,155,000; Berar, 523,000; Ajmere-Merwara, 115,000; Rajputana States, 422,000; Central India States, 120,000; Bombay Native States, 477,000; Baroda, 104,000; North-Western Provinces, 3,000; Punjab Native States, 44,000; Central Provinces Feudatory States, 58,000; Hyderabad, 500,000; Madras, 12,000; Bengal, 16,000. Total, 6,266,000. Bombay figures incomplete."

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Governor of Bombay, dated July 29, 1900:—

"Following are figures for week ending July 21:—Famine-stricken districts, 8,607 cases of cholera, of which there were fatal 5,703. Native States—cases of cholera, 8,246; deaths from cholera, 5,710. Total number of deaths among number on relief works and gratuitous relief, British districts, 6,753, or 4 2·5 per mille. Good falls of rain during past week throughout North Gujerat, Kathiawar, favourable so far for agricultural operations. Rainfall good and prospects encouraging in the remainder of the affected tracts. Numbers on relief works decreasing. Numbers on gratuitous relief increasing."

Imperial Parliament.

Thursday, July 26.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

RAILWAY CONTRACTS.

Mr. Gordon asked the Secretary of State for India, whether the methods of calculating the rates of interest (which were settled by the Bank of England), regarding the termination in 1884 and 1886 of the Eastern Bengal and Scinde Railway contracts, had never been checked and investigated by the India Office.

And, if no knowledge of this financial transaction was on record at the India Office, whether he would now seek to secure this information for official purposes, and also for publication.

Lord G. Hamilton: In the cases to which the question refers the contracts prescribed that the rate of interest should be determined by the Governor and Deputy-Governor of the Bank of England. As I stated on Monday last, I have no knowledge of the manner in which they calculated the rate, and it would have been most improper for the Secretary of State for India to interfere. I do not propose to take any such steps as are suggested in the latter part of the question

INCREASED NUMBER OF BRITISH OFFICERS.

Mr. Philip Stanhope asked the Secretary of State for India if he could state the estimated annual cost to be incurred by the proposed addition of ninety-two European officers to Punjab and Bengal Native regiments; and whether these officers would be always selected from the Indian Staff Corps, or from officers of British regiments serving their term in India, in some cases, appointed by patronage or by the Commander-in-Chief; and whether selections for these additional officers could be made from experienced Native Commissioned officers already borne on the strength of these Punjab and Bengal regiments.

Lord G. Hamilton: The addition of 92 British officers to the Indian establishment will involve a gradually increasing expenditure, which it is estimated will eventually amount, about twenty-five years hence, to about 8¼ lakhs of rupees per annum. These officers will form an increase to the Indian Staff Corps, which is recruited partly by appointments direct from Sandhurst, and partly under strictly defined regulations, from British regiments serving in India. The object of the measure is to increase the number of British officers in India, and this obviously would not be attained by selecting Native commissioned officers.

THE TROOPS FOR CHINA.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India whether he would state what arrangements had been made, or would be made, for the sick and wounded among the British troops in China.

Lord G. Hamilton: With the troops proceeding from India, numbering about 9,600 officers and men, 33 sections of field hospitals are being sent (825 beds); and in reply to a query from me, the Viceroy has telegraphed that "they are fully provided with medical stores, which need not be sent specially from England. In addition to these troops from India, about 1,400 British officers and men are proceeding from Hong-Kong, South Africa, and England. I am asking Hong-Kong what field hospitals were sent on with their contingent. Three hospital ships are being provided. One by the Government of India; one, the "Maine," by the generosity of the Atlantic Transport Company, and the benevolent exertions of American ladies; and one by the munificence of his Highness the Mahárájá Scindia of Gwalior. These will all be fully equipped in every respect. The "Maine" sailed from Southampton on the 11th instant. In addition to these vessels, General Gaselee has been authorized, should he deem it necessary, to convert three selected transports into hospital ships. As soon as he reaches Wei-hai-wei General Gaselee will report fully on the suitability of that place for the location of his base hospitals.

MANUFACTURED ARTICLES AND RAW MATERIALS.

Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree asked the Secretary of State for India, if he would give in separate figures the value of manufactured articles and raw materials respectively which were comprised in the general headings "Export of Merchandise" and "Imports of Merchandise," in the table relating to Trade at page 9 of his Explanatory Memorandum for 1900-1901.

Lord G. Hamilton: The hon. member will find the details for which he asks at pages 24 and 25 of the Explanatory Memorandum.

THE "INDIAN BUDGET" DEBATE.

TERRIBLE INTENSITY OF THE FAMINE.

PROPOSED NATIONAL GRANT FOR FAMINE RELIEF.

GRANT REFUSED.

GOVERNMENT MAJORITY ONLY 47.

THE POSITION OF THE FINANCES.

OFFICIAL OPTIMISM UNDAUNTED.

CRITICISM OF LORD WELBY'S COMMISSION.

On the order for going into Committee on the East India Revenue Accounts,

Lord G. Hamilton said: The statement I propose to make to the House, as those acquainted with the finances of India are aware, covers a period of three years, and the period with which I have to deal commences with 1898 and terminates in April, 1901. In two out of those three years a drought of unparalleled dimensions, intensity, and duration has upset the normal finances of the year, and inflicted terrible sufferings on a large portion of the population of India. I believe the House takes more interest in the cause of this abnormal affliction than in the ordinary prosaic comparisons between the revenue of different years. So I propose to devote a considerable part of my statement to describing the extent, progress, and future prospects of this terrible calamity. It is the practice in this country always to designate an affliction of this kind by the word "famine." But I do not think that word, although perhaps it may be the best word in our language, quite accurately designates the cause of an affliction of this character, and certainly does not convey to those who read about famine all the consequential evils entailed by drought. As the House is aware, India is one of the most purely agricultural countries in the world. Eighty per cent. of the population are usually engaged in agriculture, and agriculture in India, as elsewhere, is dependent on rain. But rain only falls at certain periods, and during the rest of the year a condition of more or less heat prevails. If rain fails the periods when it ordinarily falls drought obtains possession of the area not touched by rain, and not only is there a lamentable curtailment of food supply to those living in the localities where there is no rain, but all means of earning wages ceases. It is very difficult to bring home to those of us who live in a densely populated country like Great Britain, where occupations are so diversified and varied and independent of climatic conditions, what terrible industrial paralysis the failure of the monsoon causes to those districts in India which are not adequately watered. The supply of food is almost the least of the difficulties with which the Indian Government have to contend. There is always a sufficiency of food in the great continent of India, even in years of drought. Owing to the increase of communication and the development of railway enterprise that food can with greater ease be carried to the districts which are distressed. The real difficulty is that of distribution and the supervision of distribution. Cattle are the only means of transport in rural India. In a period of drought vegetation ceases and cattle die. The number of officials at the disposal of the Indian Government is limited, and it is absolutely impossible to organise a system of supervision of distribution which would enable food to be brought to the multitudinous villages, and consequently it becomes necessary to take people from their villages and aggregate them in various places where supervision may be exercised and distribution of food may be made effective. Therefore the House should bear in mind that when a calamity of this kind occurs it is not merely that people are deprived of their

crops, but all means of earning a livelihood disappear, vegetation ceases, their cattle die, and to keep them alive it is necessary to have recourse to the dislocation of the whole system of village and agricultural communities in India. All these difficulties the people in the distressed districts have borne with consummate patience and resignation, and I am glad to say there has been a remarkable absence of crime throughout the great majority of these districts. (Hear, hear.) The House may perhaps like to know what are the dimensions of the present famine. Taking the most accurate data we have of the last three serious droughts we find that in 1876 the area affected was 205,000 square miles, and the population 36,000,000. In 1896 the area affected was 275,000 square miles, and the population 52 millions. This year I am sorry to say the area affected beats the record. It is 420,000 square miles, and contains 62,000,000 of people. I am sorry to say the intensity and duration of the drought within that area is greater than in preceding droughts. The number of people on relief works in the last great drought on January 1 was 636,000. This year on January 1 the number was 2,750,000. On July 14, in the last drought, the number in receipt of relief was 3,300,000; the number at the same time this year was 6,100,000. Now if we dismiss temporarily from our minds the enormous aggregate mass of suffering, both physical and mental, that this affliction has imposed upon the localities it has touched, and look simply at the material loss which these localities have sustained, the figures assume most serious dimensions. The wheat crop in a normal year is estimated to amount in value to £24,000,000. This year, I am informed, it cannot be more than £10,000,000. The cotton industry employs a larger number of persons than any other industry except agriculture. The value of the cotton crop in a normal year is £12,000,000. This year it cannot be more than £5,000,000. Another very lucrative crop is that of oil seeds. The average value of that crop is not less than £18,000,000. This year it has disappeared altogether. I am informed on reliable authority that the reduction in the harvest in Bombay cannot be put at less than £15,000,000, excluding the frightful loss in cattle. Notwithstanding these tremendous losses, so large is India, so variable is its climate, and so unfailing is the law of compensation—that which is to the detriment of one province being very often to the benefit of another—that if we had only had to deal with one year's drought, I should from the financial point of view have been able to lay before the House an eminently satisfactory statement. But I am sorry to say that the reports of the last few days have not been at all satisfactory as regards the position of the monsoon, and we cannot dismiss the possibility that there may be a partial failure of the monsoon this year. Before I deal with the accounts I may perhaps point out to the House that they are now stated in sterling; previously they were stated in tens of rupees. In the time of the the East India Company the rupee was converted at 1s. 10½d. For many years the exchange value was 2s., a most convenient figure, introducing an unauthorised kind of decimal coinage. In the course of time the rupee steadily fell in value, and the differences between the nominal and the actual value became so great that it became necessary to alter the form of the accounts, and we took to stating the transactions in tens of rupees. That practice continued for some little time, but during the past two years the exchange value has scarcely varied from 1s. 4d. In September last the Government declared a gold standard in India, and we thought it a favourable opportunity to state all transactions in pounds sterling at the rate of fifteen rupees to the pound. The first year I have to deal with is 1898-99. I estimated last a surplus of £2,700,000; the actual surplus realised was £2,640,000. For the year 1899-1900, Mr. Dawkins, the Finance Minister, estimated a surplus of £2,600,000. He anticipated a normal year and made no special provision for famine. During the year a very heavy expenditure has had to be incurred in connexion with the famine, and very large remissions of revenue have also had to be made. These in the aggregate amount to very nearly £3,500,000. But that amount is not a net loss to the revenue. Every year there is included in the expenditure a certain sum which is allotted to famine. If no famine occurs, that money is used either in constructing effective famine works or in reducing the debt. In the year in question £730,000 was so available, and that has been used for the purpose of direct famine relief. Therefore, the amount so far as the famine is concerned is only £2,631,000. That, of course, is a very large deduction from the original estimate, but I am glad to say that we have had certain windfalls, and certain branches of revenue show such an improvement that I have more than a corresponding balance to show on the other side. Army expenditure is much less in consequence of the European contingent which has gone to South Africa. The railways have given a very good return, nearly half a million in excess of the estimate. Telegraphs also show a large increase, and the gain on revenue generally is nearly £1,400,000. Adding all these sums together, we get a gain on the Budget of last year of £2,870,000, and putting that against the loss caused by the famine, the first year of famine expenditure, after paying all expenses connected with the famine, closed with the substantial surplus of £2,800,000. (Cheers.) That put us in a position of exceptional financial strength for dealing with the famine expenditure of this year. When, therefore, Mr. Dawkins had to balance the expenditure and the income for the year, he estimated that he might safely rely upon a normal monsoon for this year, a monsoon which would be adequate in its volume and effective in its distribution. Inasmuch as it was the west of India that was affected by this drought, parts which had not for a century known lack of rain, his estimate seemed to be a prudent one, and one upon which we thought we might safely rely. But I am sorry to say that during the past ten days the accounts of the behaviour of the monsoon have not been at all satisfactory, and I am afraid that we must contemplate a very considerable expenditure over and above that which the Indian Government estimated in March last. For this year, after all the expenditure and all the loss of revenue inflicted on the Government of India by drought, they thought they might rely on a surplus of £160,000. About eight days ago I got the revised account. The monsoon had then broken well, and the Indian Government thought it would not be necessary to make any much larger provision than they included in the original estimate, and they informed me that they thought the surplus for this year would be about £50,000. Now the monsoon was very late this year. In recent years the Meteorological Department have established a direct connexion between the fall of rain in India and the height of the Nile flood in Egypt. For the last twenty years, when there has been a failure of rain in India, the Nile flood has been low. Last year the flood was one of the lowest on record, and the failure of the monsoon was exceptionally bad. This year the Nile flood was normal, and that inspires the hope that ultimately the monsoon will fulfil its normal course. But on Tuesday night I received a telegram from the Viceroy, in which he stated that, after consulting with the Finance Department, he had come to the conclusion that it would be necessary to provide for an additional £1,200,000 for famine relief and the remission of land revenues. So that instead of a surplus of £160,000 a deficit of £826,000 is now contemplated. I will read a telegram from the Viceroy, which states the facts upon which this estimate of increased expenditure is based. It is dated Simla, July 25, 9 a.m.:—"Since my famine telegram to you of July 20, conditions have changed decidedly for the worse. No rain has since fallen in Punjab, Sind, or Gujerat; insignificant rain in North-Western Provinces, Bombay, Deccan, and Rajputana. On West Coast ordinary monsoon current has failed, and there are no present indications of revival. It is, therefore, not impossible that we may be faced, at any rate in Gujerat, Kathiawar, Baroda, and South-West Rajputana, with a far more serious situation than has yet arisen, while should monsoon continue to hold off a large part of India may be in for a second consecutive year of famine." Then Lord Curzon, with his characteristic vigour, adds: "I am going down myself on Monday to Gujerat to spend a week in the distressed districts and personally inspect the state of affairs." (Cheers.) The Viceroy and Lord Northcote will consult together, and before the end of the week we shall, no doubt, have a further report of the state of affairs. I have now a telegram from the Governor of Bombay of the same date as the Viceroy's telegram, but despatched at 4.15 p.m. As he is much nearer to the distressed area, we may assume that this telegram is twenty-eight hours later than Lord Curzon's:—"Your telegram, July 21. Rainfall has been generally sufficient for agricultural purposes in Surat and Southern Gujerat States. Some rain has fallen in part of Broach, where cotton sowings being actively prosecuted; but more rain is urgently required in Kaira, Ahmedabad, Panch Mahals. Rain not sufficient for agricultural purposes except in a few places. Two-and-a-half inches of rain have fallen since yesterday, Godhra, Panch Mahals; one in several parts Ahmedabad; over half an inch in parts Kaira; rain sufficient in parts Baroda, adjoining Surat; no rain anywhere in Okhamandal division, Baroda; rainfall to date insufficient in the remainder of Baroda, where extensive failure of crops inevitable unless good rain falls in a few days." It is a part of Bombay known as Gujerat, the richest and most fertile of the provinces of Western India, and for 100 years it has not known what drought is. It is a great cattle-breeding district and a country where the people to a large extent live upon a milk diet. We have only four small collectorships in that district, and these are exceedingly difficult to administer, because they are inhabited by a great number of the non-Aryan aboriginal tribes, who are not easy to manage in times of drought. They are surrounded by Native territories, which have not the same supplies and efficiency of administration as in our own territories, and they are liable to be flooded with the distress from the Native territories. There are four districts, and in the first rain has fallen; in the others rain is required. "No rain worth mentioning has fallen in any of the districts of Kathiawar, excepting small area south-east, where also more rain is urgently needed. Cultivation at a standstill for want of rain in almost the whole province. No signs of rain. Season is far advanced for sowing jowar, staple cereal, but bajri can be still mostly substituted for jowar. Still time for cotton. Cattle dying from starvation. Scarcity of water increasing day by day." This refers only to the northern portion of Gujerat, which has suffered exceptionally, and where the deathrate for June has increased by nearly one-half over the deathrate for May. I propose to raise a loan of £3,000,000. For some time past I have made arrangements for inviting tenders, and these will be asked for on Friday next. It will be part of the unexpended balance of the loan which I obtained three years ago. I assumed at that time that the greater portion of it would be spent in the next two years; but our finances have been so good that I have still £9,000,000 unexpended. After consultation with my advisers, I am of opinion that I shall be able, with that and other resources, to meet any demands which the Viceroy or the Government of Bombay may make between now and the end of October. But, of course, there may be difficulties. We may not be able to make available our existing credit; and in that case we shall appeal unhesitatingly to the British Treasury. (Cheers.) I have always held that where life can be saved by expenditure the whole financial resources of the Indian Government must be utilised; and that if, owing to untoward circumstances, we are unable to utilise our credit, her Majesty's Government will in that case come to our assistance. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Maclean: Will that be a free grant?

Lord G. Hamilton: The hon. member must not anticipate. In dealing with the complicated conditions of this famine it is impossible for me now to anticipate the exact shape which that assistance ought to take. My hon. friend is under the impression that the Indian Government have been somewhat curtailed in their expenditure by desire for economy. I have had a table prepared of the total amount which the famine has cost India, and of the ways and means which we have, without any financial embarrassment, been able to apply to meet this exceptional expenditure. There has been spent, or provision has been made for spending, £6,189,000 in direct relief. There has been remitted in land revenues £3,400,000. Loans to Native States for the purpose of meeting the famine have been £2,346,000; and advances to individuals have amounted to £1,100,000. That is an aggregate disbursement on the part of the Indian Government of upwards of £13,000,000 sterling in two years. Nobody who realises

the magnitude of these figures can say—as has been said in some quarters—that there has been an attempt to run this famine on the cheap. No demand of the Government of India or of Bombay has been refused; we have complied with every requisition, and shall continue to do so as long as the object is the saving of life. Let us see how far success or failure has attended our efforts. A very considerable portion of the area now affected by drought was similarly affected three years ago; and any one who did not very carefully study the consequences and effects of the Indian drought and famine would naturally suppose that the mortality would be higher in the districts which had been twice affected than in the districts affected for the first time. But, curiously enough, exactly the reverse is the case. In 1897 the Central Provinces, which suffered for the first time, were terribly afflicted by scarcity and there was a heavy mortality. This year they have been even harder hit, and there is a larger proportion of the people on relief works. But, except for those districts where epidemics have broken out, the mortality has been low. The conclusion at which I have arrived from a careful study of the famine of 1896-97 and from my previous experience of the famine of 1874, is that the first essential of successful famine administration is to get the people to come in early, when they are still in good physical condition. If that is done, then it is easy enough, but if, on the other hand, from various reasons, the people will not come on the relief works until the last stage of exhaustion and inanition their vitality is so low that it is almost beyond the powers of the authorities to revive them. They bring with them the germs of disease, which they communicate to healthy persons. Almost all the criticisms which have been hostile to the administration of famine relief have been devoted to the conduct of famine affairs in the province of Gujerat, and the province has not been afflicted by famine or drought for nearly 100 years. The mortality in Gujerat has been exceptionally high. It has been a source of the greatest solicitude both to myself and the Viceroy. I have been in constant communication on the subject, but it is exceedingly difficult to put your finger on any error which has been made. The expenditure per unit there on relief is higher than in any other part of Bombay. The works there are more numerous, and the number of additional officers drafted there is higher than in any other part of Bombay. The collection of the land revenue has been almost infinitesimal. Undoubtedly the result so far as mortality is concerned is not satisfactory. Whenever operations are over it has been the practice to appoint a commission of enquiry to investigate the various methods adopted. We shall have recourse to this procedure when this famine is over, and I hope that the collection of facts and the expression of opinions may be of use to the officials of the locality in dealing with subsequent outbreaks. But the difficulties which the local officers have to contend with are enormous. I saw a report of the origin of the terrible outbreak of Asiatic cholera which suddenly occurred at the capital of one of the provinces. An American gentleman, the editor of a newspaper, published an account of what he saw in the *Times of India*. For many years he had devoted himself to charitable work, and he was a very competent authority to express an opinion as to the enormous difficulties which the relief officers have from time to time to cope with. There was great distress in the Native States, and it was necessary, therefore, that some works of a certain size should be put up for the purpose of giving employment. In the middle of April a large tank work was opened in the immediate vicinity to meet the case of thousands of starving people from the outlying districts outside our own administration: "The story of the cholera outbreak in Godhra is ancient history, but it is worth retelling. In the middle of April the big Kanelao tank work was opened in the immediate vicinity of Godhra town to meet the case of the thousands of starving people flocking in from the outlying districts. The rush to this upset all calculations, and by the 20th of the month over 11,000 were crowded on to a work intended for only half that number. The administrative machinery broke down under the strain. . . . . The people came hungry and resourceless; and hungry and resourceless they had to remain. . . . . The receding waters of the tank confined within a limited space an enormous number of fish, and, deprived of other food, the starving people threw themselves upon this unwholesome diet and washed it down with the foul and putrid fluid in the tank. A great rise in the mortality gave rise to suspicions of cholera, and on the 20th one case was detected. On the 21st there was a lull, on the 22nd the storm broke, and 200 dead bodies lay about the camp. The ensuing panic was indescribable. The people gathered up their loins and fled from the unseen terror." It is a sad tragedy, but no one can blame the officers on the spot for not receiving the actual number of persons who flocked in. Although there was a terrible mortality among those receiving relief, it was not confined to them. "The wife of Mr. Cooper, the superintendent of the work, was struck down, and since then both Mr. Cooper and his little child have fallen victims to the disease." It is a sad incident, only typical, however, of what was going on in other districts. All over the distressed districts our officers are combating these great evils with the greatest courage, success, and patience. In proportion to their numbers they have fallen victims to death uncomplainingly, believing that their work was appreciated by those with whom they came in contact and quite confident that their fellow-countrymen at home will not be harsh or unfair critics of their action. (Cheers.) Of all the men who visited those works no one was so competent to express an opinion as Dr. Klopsch, the American gentleman to whom I have referred. After a visit to those works he wrote a final letter to the newspapers, in which he gave expression to the opinion: "The more I see of this stupendous Government relief undertaking, the less I feel competent to criticise. With the limited number of intelligent workers at the Government's disposal it is a marvel that so much is being accomplished, and on the whole so well done." (Cheers.) It has been pointed out by hon. members that in their judgment my action is inconsistent, inasmuch as I appealed to the Lord Mayor and the public for funds to combat the famine, but at the same time I have not asked the Imperial Treasury to give a grant for that purpose. Hon. gentlemen who have not given a close study to the principles of famine administration in India say that the fact of appealing to the public shows that the task is beyond the control of the Government, and that if this is the case we should frankly say so and come for aid to the Imperial Government. Those criticisms imply a very limited knowledge of the methods and the machinery which we employ in connexion with famine administration. Many years ago, when the organisation was not systematised for the purpose of dealing with famine, money was subscribed by the public. Practically it was applied to the same object, and the result was that there was a great deal of overlapping and distress did not get the full benefit of the money which was voted for relief. In 1878 the celebrated Famine Commission was appointed, of which Sir Richard Strachey was chairman. It had one of the most difficult administrative tasks which was ever laid before any body of men. There is no permanent Poor Law in India; it does not exist. But India is subject to periodical visitations that contract and expand with extraordinary rapidity. At one time drought may cause temporary distress; a few days afterwards it may sweep the whole province and deprive the people of the means of obtaining food. What that Commission had to do was to improvise a system of poor relief so thorough and elastic that it could be applied to all these various phases of famine relief. They laid down elaborate regulations the principle of which was that the Government of India took upon itself the obligation of finding food for all and work for those who were unable to obtain it, and to supplement this system of relief by kitchen poor-houses and hospitals. In fact, they were to take upon themselves as regards relieving distress a higher and wider obligation than was ever undertaken by a civilised Government in Europe. If the Government of India took all these duties on itself was there any sphere of action for private charity and benevolence? The Commission emphatically replied in the affirmative; but they said that if an appeal is made to the public that appeal must be an authorised appeal of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, and it must be arranged that every one subscribing will see that the money it gives is not in deduction of the Government aid, but an addition to it, and that the work shall be in clearly defined spheres of action, separate and distinct, and in addition to that which the Government undertakes. It is on that ground alone I appealed to the public, and not because we were unable to fulfil all the obligations we had undertaken of ourselves. It was because I wanted charity and benevolence to co-operate with us in that work; and the object for which this money is asked is not work which the Government can undertake. There are four objects. First, to supplement the dole or the ration which the Government gives by a special comfort in the shape of clothing or food. It is a work of discrimination, and it is impossible for the Government in the case of the enormous number of persons who come on the relief works to attempt that individual discrimination. The second object is to try and get together committees of all religious denominations, and through the instrumentality of those committees to get at the people who from caste and other reasons decline to participate in any system of relief. The third object is to give special attention to orphans, and the last is to make advances to the cultivators of the soil to enable them to commence agriculture again. That burden we have put on the shoulders of the Indian Government because it seemed to us to be a proper and legitimate function for them to discharge, and we have practically during the past year devoted something like £1,100,000 to that purpose and to relieve to that extent the charitable funds and consequently enable them to devote their attention exclusively to other objects. It is said that after all Indian Government aids and disbursements are regulated by the state of your finances. What really regulates expenditure in India is the Famine Code. That Code made provision for every conceivable contingency, and two extreme principles upon which it is founded and which regulate its action are on the one hand that money should not be wasted, and on the other that wherever life can be saved there expenditure is to be incurred. (Cheers.) As far as the relief of famine in India is concerned, the whole financial resources, the whole administrative machinery, are at the disposal of those who are combating this terrible evil, and it is only in the event of our being unable to give effect to the regulations which we have deliberately laid down that we shall appeal for help or assistance elsewhere. May I just say a word to many hon. friends on both sides who, actuated by the most philanthropic motives, were desirous that the Imperial Government should in the earlier stages of the famine have contributed a large sum to help the Indian Government in their task? I quite admit that conditions may arise under which we may be brought face to face with facts which would necessitate such assistance on a large scale, but I for one have been brought up to believe that if you want to encourage effective economy in India, if you want to ensure financial reform, you must make Indian finance as far as possible independent and self-supporting. We live in a time when public expenditure is the fashion. (Opposition cheers.) There seems to be no class of expenditure to which a large portion of members of the House are not ready to give their assent, and it is a very hard task when there is this craving for expenditure for the Chancellor of the Exchequer in England, with the taxpayer at his back, to prevent expenditure advancing by leaps and bounds. There is no more unpopular and unpleasant task which any man can undertake than that of checking the demands so constantly falling upon him. In India there is just the same pressure; but if the Minister of Finance in India is consistent in trying to keep down expenditure because he knows he must balance his income and expenditure, it is his duty to establish an equilibrium between the income and the disbursements of the Indian Government. It is nearly twenty-seven years ago since I first went to the India Office. I was under admirable tuition, and my mentors were always great upon this—that the only hope of effective economy, the only hope of improving the financial system, was to make India independent and self-supporting. Therefore, if I objected to and opposed premature proposals to the Imperial Exchequer it is not because I have not sympathy with the sufferings of the Indian people, but because I believe the course I have adopted is for the truest well-being of India. (Cheers.) I feel that a sound system of finance depends upon the development of the

material and industrial products of the country. I believe that as soon as this cloud passes we shall be able to make considerable remissions of taxation and so to improve and ameliorate the general condition of the taxpayers. (Cheers.) But I admit that this must be conditional upon fair treatment by the Imperial Treasury as regards the apportionment of the charges in which the two Exchequers have a common interest, and that naturally brings me to the very elaborate report, delivered after years of investigation, which Lord Welby's Commission have drawn up. In this House it is the fashion with a good many of my friends on both sides to accuse the representative of the India Office with taking an optimistic view of Indian finance. Now, just let the House look at what are the main statements of this report made by men of the highest authority, who have spent their whole lives in examining questions of finance, and some of whom have been intimately associated with the Treasury here. They say first that the financial machinery of the Indian Government is well organised and effectively controlled. Then they go on to say that, though the growth of expenditure has exceeded the normal growth of revenue, this was mainly due to the increased cost of exchange due to the fall in value of the rupee, and that, except for this fall, a considerable reduction of taxation might have been looked for. They further say that during the past forty years the unproductive debt of India had been reduced twenty-five per cent., that the commercial services, the telegraphs and post-offices, were worked at a considerable profit, and that the railway and irrigation works, with their far-reaching benefits, entail but a very slight cost. And, lastly, they say that the apportionment of charge between the United Kingdom and India as regards matters in which they have a common interest has on the whole been equitable and fair. If then we take a sanguine view it is because we have our pulse in Indian finance. If we could stop this fall in exchange, if we could in any way ensure anything like stability in exchange, I am perfectly positive it would be possible in future to make considerable reductions in taxation. Not only so, but you would offer the strongest inducements to capitalists in this country to make investments in India. (Cheers.) The question of exchange is indeed the key of the situation. The Commission suggests practically that a certain sum should be transferred from one Treasury to the other, and they assume that if this sum is so transferred the arrangements between the two Governments will in future be practically equitable. Taking the proposals in their entirety, the amount which they propose should be transferred and charged from one Treasury to the other is £257,000. I have been in communication with the various departments concerned. The Government wish to give the most favourable consideration to these proposals, and we hope that in the course of a few months we shall be able to make arrangements whereby a sum equivalent to £257,000 shall be transferred as suggested, and India to that extent will be benefited. (Cheers.) At the same time, I am bound to guard myself by saying that I do not necessarily bind myself to accept all the detailed proposals of the Commissioners. I naturally pass on from Lord Welby's Commission to the work we have done during the past year in connexion with our object of establishing a gold standard associated with a limited gold currency. What did the experts tell us? We always like to consult experts. I think it is often pleasant to hear them talk, but the real satisfaction is when a number of experts have irretrievably committed themselves to a proposition which subsequent events show to be wholly and utterly false. (Laughter.) The experts on this occasion who were opposed to our policy all told us that we might be able to establish a gold standard by proclamation in India, but as to associating with that a gold currency or getting any amount of gold flowing into India it was an absurdity. The famine to which I have so frequently alluded caused a great falling-off in the export trade of India, war broke out in the Transvaal, the world was deprived of its largest source of gold supply, and in consequence of the war expenditure the price of money rose. If the Committee of which the right hon. gentleman was chairman could have foreseen that in the first year after they concluded their report conditions so unfavourable to the realisation of a gold standard and currency in India would have existed, I think they would not have wanted action to be taken until a normal state of things had been re-established. Yet, notwithstanding this combination of influences against us during the past year, there has been a superabundance of gold. I do not like to trouble the House with figures, but this is an interesting matter There is a very large note circulation in India, and a considerable portion of this note circulation is covered by Government securities, the remainder by coined metal, either rupees or gold. In January, 1899, the note issues secured by metal were 15 crores 67 lakhs; against that was held silver, 15 crores 19 lakhs; gold, 48 lakhs. In October silver had fallen to 12 crores 36 lakhs, and gold had risen to more than 5 crores. In January this year silver had fallen to 6 crores 78 lakhs, and gold had risen to $10\frac{1}{2}$ crores. On May 1, of the notes for $18\frac{1}{2}$ crores secured by metal, only $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores were represented by silver. We were in consequence obliged to buy silver and coin it to exchange it for gold. We have been compelled to buy £1,900,000 of silver, sufficient to coin 440 lakhs. About 1,689 lakhs of rupees, or £11,260,000, have been added to the rupee circulation since April 1, 1899. I congratulate the chairman of the Committee on the singular success which has attended its recommendations. We have got over the initial difficulty, and I hope that with the exercise of patience and vigilance we shall in measurable time have accomplished the objects we have in view. I am afraid I have detained the House a long time, but there are a great many amendments on the notice paper and no doubt I shall be able to deal in reply to them with various other subjects of interest. There is only one other item of expenditure on which I wish to say a word or two—Army Expenditure. The cost of military equipment seems to me to have almost escaped the control of the civilised world. I often wonder whether the great military Powers when they forced all the men of their nations into arms foresaw the result which would follow. The result has been that there has been such a demand for the manufacture of arms and munitions of war that their manufacture has become a most profitable undertaking. In the old days Governments for the most part manufactured their own arms and munitions; now there are great syndicates for the purpose composed of men of the highest scientific attainments, of great chemists, of great financiers. All the modern processes of production and industrial organisation are combined for the purpose of making more deadly weapons with which men may kill one another. The whole resources of civilisation are ransacked to obtain more effective weapons of warfare. No Government can stand aside and allow its army to be armed with weapons which are a few years old. To such an extent is the manufacture of arms pushed that it has destroyed the difference which used to exist between the barbarous and civilised Powers. The civilised Powers used to keep back barbarism by the superiority of their arms and weapons, but now these great syndicates are prepared to provide barbarous nations with arms of the most modern type, provided they can pay for them. In these circumstances the Government of India have no option but to see that our men are equipped with the most modern weapons. Our native army in India until recently was armed with the Martini rifle. We thought it necessary that they should have the more modern weapon and we were able to arm a considerable portion of the Native army early in this year with Enfields. I regret that we have to incur this expenditure, but it is inevitable. The sums which have been paid by the British Government for the contingents to South Africa and China will to a very large extent cover the expenditure. In certain quarters it is suggested that, because the Indian Government in exceptional circumstances have allowed a certain number of the troops of their establishments to go to South Africa and China, the Indian establishments must be in excess of the requirements. The emergency, however, was in both cases altogether exceptional, and the Indian Government were perfectly justified under the circumstances in doing what they did. Because in abnormal circumstances we ran a risk, it is unreasonable to suppose that when affairs return to their normal condition we should still continue to run that risk. Therefore I can hold out no hope whatever of a reduction of military expenditure. I think, if anything is done, we may have slightly to increase it. That is not due to any wish to extend our territory, or to adopt any aggressive policy. During the last year Lord Curzon has shown great energy and determination in seeing everything for himself; he has passed all along the frontier. Two principles have been laid down for the regulation of our North-West Frontier policy. One is the substitution of levies and local Militia for British Indian troops, and the other withdrawal from cantonments outside the administrative frontier. That policy has been vigorously followed by Lord Curzon. He has placed a local Militia on the frontier, and has withdrawn the troops from cantonments outside the frontier and concentrated them in convenient cantonments where they will be in readiness to go at very short notice to the relief of the local levies if required. Suggestions have been made to the Indian Government to construct a railway down the Khaibar Pass, and to place a British garrison at Kotal, but these views did not recommend themselves to Lord Curzon and myself, and the only railroad made is one to Jamrud, in our own territory. I cannot leave the Indian Army without alluding to the irreparable loss India has sustained by the death of two distinguished soldiers, Sir Donald Stewart and Sir William Lockhart. (Hear, hear.) Sir Donald Stewart's military reputation is well known. (Hear, hear.) He was for 15 years past a member of the Council of the Secretary of State, and a shrewder or more sagacious adviser never had a seat on that Council, and with his unfailing sagacity and great patience, he was as good an adviser in financial, political, and administrative questions as he was in military questions. (Hear, hear.) Sir William Lockhart was a born leader of men and a man of immense force of character. (Hear, hear.) He no doubt shortened his life by his devotion to duty, for he was undergoing a course of German baths when he was called upon to take up the command in India. He went out at a moment's notice, and I fear that the hardships he underwent so impaired his health that he was never able fully to recover. There is one characteristic about these two great men. Both had rare powers of attracting the Native officers and Natives who served under them in such a way as to secure their complete confidence. There is another most distinguished Anglo-Indian soldier, Lord Roberts—(cheers)—who possesses this characteristic to a superlative degree. We have made enormous changes in India during the last ten years. Our Government is stronger and more solidified than it was before that period. The material prosperity of a large section of the population has greatly increased and our mechanism of government has so improved and developed that I think it may fairly be claimed for it that it is the most advanced and scientific system that India has ever possessed. Yet sometimes I have doubts whether our popularity has increased. Sir, we have gone on improving our administration, we have passed up through various stages of administrative improvements, until administration at the present moment has reached the highest point of development. This work has been accomplished by a great deal of labour and ability, and I do not think too much credit can be given to those who have achieved it. (Hear, hear.) We have codified the laws and simplified procedure, and we have made uniform our methods of administration, but, looking at all these great improvements, can it be said that they are as palatable to the people to whom they are applied as the older and cruder system? We have no fault to find with those who have administered the laws. They are fully up to the standard of those of earlier years in intelligence and sense of duty, but they do not get the opportunities which were afforded to the young men who formerly went out from here to serve in India early in life and usually spent their lives there, being placed not infrequently in isolated positions in which they had to depend on their own resources for the preservation of law and order. That has all gone. We have passed from the old patriarchal methods. The gentlemen who go out to India now are in a different position. Everybody has a code for everything, and if the code fails there is the telegraph by which he can get assistance at the earliest possible moment. But that is not the only evil from which civil servants in India suffer. They have everything that develops, telegraphs and railways, and the result is that they are so overburdened with correspondence, reports, and returns that

they are really imprisoned in their offices for the greater part of the day, and it is only when such a great calamity as that with which India is now afflicted occurs and sweeps away all their stereotyped procedure that these men are able to come out of their offices and join with the other forces at work in dealing with the trouble. Then the sympathy of these men brooks no denial and we see them come out and toil to ameliorate the condition of the sick and the poor. (Hear, hear.) I hear from all sides in the distressed districts of India which are suffering such terrible loss that the work of these men has rekindled between the Government and the governed that feeling of regard and affection which was so marked a characteristic in India. (Hear, hear.) We have a remarkable man as Viceroy, a man of untiring energy and unbounded power of work, and he has devoted his energy to every branch of administration. (Hear, hear.) His wish is so to free the official that he shall be able to get more time to give to the essentials of administration, and therefore I am hopeful that, although one cannot but deplore the mass of suffering and misery through which India is passing, and which may occur again in subsequent years—I sincerely hope and believe that the outcome of this misfortune will not be without its benefits to India, that the wounds and scars which this terrible calamity has inflicted may be forgotten, and that the interchange of kindly feeling and mutual regard among all classes who have fought the common fight may be a lasting and increasing influence in guiding the future fortunes of India. (Cheers.)

Sir H. H. Fowler.

Sir H. H. Fowler: The House is greatly indebted to the noble lord for the admirable statement he has made. I have been much struck by the pathos, eloquence, and voluminous exposition of detail which has characterised his masterly speech. (Hear, hear.) I think it will take the foremost place among the statements of Indian finance that have been made to the House. (Hear, hear.) The noble lord has gone over the greater part of the ground over which it is usual to travel, and he has also dealt in a sympathetic manner with the great calamity from which India is suffering, and has brought before us the difficulties which he and his colleagues have had to face in this difficult situation. There are one or two points on which, perhaps, I do not quite agree with him and on which I may have to express my views in a few words, and beyond that I do not propose to trouble the House at any length. I should like, however, to add my testimony to the great loss India has sustained in the death of the great men the noble lord has referred to. I was associated with Sir Donald Stewart when I was in office as Secretary of State, and I can say that not only was he one of the wisest of military advisers, but also one of the soundest financiers I ever met, and one of the wisest and most practical of men in administration. (Hear, hear.) We have sustained another loss this year, happily not occasioned by death. I deeply regret that one of the most eminent civil servants to whom the administration of India has been entrusted has found himself compelled to deprive the Indian Government of his services—I refer to Mr. Dawkins, to whom the greater part of the credit for the reform of the Indian currency belongs. (Hear, hear.) There were several figures given by the noble lord which were interesting to the House, and one or two I should like to supplement. I quite admit that the Currency Commission did not anticipate the calamity that has fallen on the Empire of India during the last few months. I am sure that not one of the members of that Commission would have signed that report and adopted so great a change if they had known that we should shortly be engaged in a war in South Africa and that India would be suffering from a terrible famine. As far as we can see at present everything that has transpired since is encouraging as to the probable success of that operation. The noble lord has told us how the predictions unfavourable to the operation have been falsified. But he has not told us the effect of this great change upon trade, and the House will remember the abnormal condition of trade as far as famine is concerned and the state of things produced in the cotton trade as far as China is concerned. The total trade of India, in and out, was in 1898 105 millions; in 1899 109 millions and a quarter; and in 1900 115 millions and a quarter. So far as exports were concerned, in 1898 they were 56 millions; in 1899 65 millions; and in 1900 65 millions. Still, notwithstanding that the export of wheat and rice was necessarily reduced by the failure of the crops and rice by diversion into the famine districts, English trade was affected. I make it, therefore, from the gold being absorbed and the Government having to borrow in order to obtain a stock at home, that, from April 1, the currency of gold in reserve was two millions sterling and on March 7 of this year seven millions sterling and, in addition, the Secretary of State had accumulated in London a million and a half of gold for his purposes here. So the aggregate of gold under the control of the Secretary of State was eight millions and a half. Now there must be in India a silver reserve. The noble lord has had this year to buy silver. There is one factor it is impossible to pronounce accurately upon—the quantity of silver necessarily diverted into the famine districts, and that may disturb calculations. I understand the Indian Government intend to have a gold reserve of five millions. Beyond that they propose to give gold, not under any legal obligation, in exchange for silver and also to accept it on the other side of the account. The gold taken from currency in payment of notes is £130,700. I mention that as showing that the people are still pursuing the old habits of trade and that the report of the committee that the great bulk of the internal transactions of India would continue to be carried on in silver is being borne out and the quantity of gold circulated is equally small. The gain is in the fixity of exchange between this country and India, and estimating the cost of a common denomination. I hope this great change which has marked the administration of the noble lord will act most beneficially on the trade, commerce, taxation, and prosperity of India. (Hear, hear.) As far as I can gather a sum of money has evidently been exported from this country to India for investment in India. With reference to the famine I have nothing to add to the pathetic statement of the noble lord and his just expression of admiration of the manner in which the famine has been grappled with by the officials, and I hope the House will note what has been stated by the noble lord and Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, that the actual cost to the Government of India—not the people of India (that would have been a great deal more)—in the last two years has been 13 millions sterling, an amount absolutely unprecedented in Indian history and an indication of the sound financial position in which India stands. The Secretary of State makes this a strong argument for objecting to India being relieved from Imperial funds. "India is able to meet its own requirements. We ought not to appeal to the English Exchequer to help us." I agree that an equilibrium should be maintained between income and expenditure and I would oppose anything which would appear like the pauperisation of India. But the large excess of revenue out of which these large sums are being provided really means an excess of taxation levied beyond the actual requirements of the Indian Government in normal circumstances. In other words, if it had not been for this exceptional expenditure there must have been large reduction of taxation. That being so, I say we come to the point of voluntary contribution. There should be a payment made by Great Britain to her great dependency to help her in this great calamity. (Hear, hear.) You may say India does not need it. But sympathy is a strong force in human affairs. Sentiment is a strong force in human affairs. We have recently received strong marks of sympathy from India and our colonies. There are two sides to this, and if we receive expressions of sympathy from India and the colonies we must be prepared in return to give expression of sympathy when the time arrives. A great Indian prince, the Mahárájá of Gwalior, has recently offered to fit out a hospital ship for the use of the British Government in China. I suppose if that great Indian prince had not come forward a hospital ship would not have been wanting, but throughout the length and breadth of the land this expression of sympathy from that great Indian Prince to the mother country will be recognised and admired far more than its intrinsic value. (Cheers.) If the Government had been prepared, not as a matter of dry finance, to say to India: "You are in financial difficulties, and we will relieve you," and the people of this country, through their representatives in Parliament, had said: "We will vote India a sum of money to aid her in her calamity as an expression of our national sympathy in addition to private charity," I believe that, as a matter of State policy, it would have been one of the wisest things the Imperial Government could have done. These perpetual appeals to the charitable section of the English public—I find no fault—are only responded to by a limited class, and the same class who give for the relief of the soldier, sailor, the suffering, and hospitals, whether in India or elsewhere. But there is a great mass of wealthy people in this country who give to nothing. (Cheers.) It is only right and fair that they, deriving advantages from this great relationship between us and our colonies and India, should take their share, as part of the nation, in doing what I believe the nation would desire to have done. (Cheers.) Whether the Secretary for India asks for a large or a small sum, and whether he terms it a loan without interest or a grant, the handsomer, the more generous, and spontaneous it is it will be better appreciated and approved by the people of this country, and will be accepted in the same spirit by the people of India. (Cheers.) As to the proposal of the Commission, I think it is a starting point in Indian history, and that it has dispelled, and will dispel, a great many delusions which have taken hold of the popular mind in England and India with regard to our financial position there. The Commission was appointed to enquire into the administration and management of the military and civil expenditure of India, both at home and in India, and into the apportionment of the charge between the Imperial and the Indian Governments for purposes in which both Governments are interested. That Commission sat for two or three years and took the opportunity of ascertaining from the best authorities what were the facts of the case. I think the facts are stated in the report with singular accuracy, clearness, and fairness, and for many years to come the various details of Indian finance will have there an authorised text-book. But I think the Commission have been very timid in their recommendations. There are some of their recommendations which I am glad to hear the noble lord does not intend to accept. I am very sorry that they were not unanimous with reference to the audit. There was a very strong weight of opinion that though the present audit was very admirable, still it was desirable that the Controller and Auditor-General in India should be put in the same position as the Controller and Auditor-General in this country and should be absolutely independent of the Executive. The only ground of objection I can trace was the very familiar one, "Oh, it would cost too much; it is not worth the expense." I think it is worth the expense. The last estimate I have seen of the cost of an independent audit in India puts the figure at £15,000. I do not think that is a sum worth saving on a question of this magnitude. There is another point with reference to the position of the Finance Minister in the Indian Council. At present there are two military members in that body. I think the Commander-in-Chief ought to be removed, just as the Commander-in-Chief here is from the English Cabinet. That is a subject which I hope the Government will very carefully consider. The question of the debt of India is one upon which we have often had discussions in this House. Some gentleman sent me a book this week in which he stated that, while the English debt had been reduced by something like £140,000,000 since the Crimean War, the debt of India during that time had steadily increased. This is from a very distinguished author, and I am sure he would not make a misrepresentation. But he did not divide the debt into productive and non-productive debt. There is the ordinary debt which every State must incur, and there is the public works debt, which pays its own interest and repays its own capital. At the close of the Mutiny the debt of India stood at £97,000,000. In 1897 that had been reduced to £73,500,000. The noble lord's memorandum puts it in the clearest way, and it shows that the entire debt of India, productive and non-productive, is £212,000,000. The assets which India has in the shape of railways, canals, irrigation works, money lent to corporations, etc.,

is £182,000,000. The net debt of India at this moment, after having going through this terrible famine, is £30,000,000. (Cheers.) I do not believe there is any great civilised Government in the world where there is so small a debt as there is in India at the present time. This Commission has also found that the civil expenditure is not excessive as compared with 1875. It has not been excessive as compared with the expenditure of other countries, and although there has been a net increase of 25 per cent., there has been an increase in the population of 20 per cent. I hope the Government will take into its most careful consideration the various recommendations of the Commission, and even if they do not agree with them, they should settle the questions once and for all. I do not think the Treasury has done what it ought to have done in the proposal now suggested as a settlement. I do not think this £250,000 a year does adequately meet the claims of India. I think there is a greater claim, not upon the charity, but upon the justice of the people of this country, with reference to military charges. A great portion of your military reserve is in India. You had to have recourse to India with reference both to South Africa and to China. I have no wish that India should in any way profit by the transaction, but looking at it as a whole judicially and fairly I think that the contribution from India to what is called the capitation grant is too high. (Hear, hear.) I express again my thanks to the noble lord, and I re-echo his hope in regard to the somewhat gloomy view of the Viceroy on Tuesday, which is certainly modified by the telegram on Wednesday from Lord Northcote, and of course Bombay is a most important district. We are at present in July, and I think August is a very important month in the history of the monsoon, and I hope the situation may not prove to be so gloomy as is at present anticipated; but whether that be so or not I think we shall not forget, India will not forget, and history will not forget the admirable manner in which the British Government in India and the officials of the British Government have grappled with this calamity with a success not paralleled either in the history of India or that of any government in the world. (Cheers.)

Mr. Robinson Souttar.

Mr. Robinson Souttar said that the speeches of the noble lord and the member for Wolverhampton encouraged him to press the motion which was down in his name. (Hear, hear.) The speech of his right hon. friend was of course a direct encouragement, but the speech of the noble lord was also encouraging in its degree. It showed three things. First, that the Government of India realised that the trouble was by no means over; second, that they recognised that in spite of all their efforts they were incapable of dealing with the mass of suffering which had to be alleviated; and third, that the noble lord had not entirely closed his heart against a Parliamentary grant. (Hear, hear.) He must explain that the terms of his motion were not quite in accordance with the rules of the House. It was not lawful for a private member to propose a motion by which the burden upon the taxpayer would be increased. He was advised that by substituting the words "a large and generous gift" his motion would be in order, and he would ask that this might be done and that they would look upon the figure of "five millions" as a suggestion of what in the opinion of his friends and himself a large and generous gift would be. He should like before proceeding to the main question to say how greatly they all appreciated the work which was being done in India in connexion with the famine. Both Natives and Europeans, from the Viceroy down to the humblest official, had been working most energetically and unselfishly, doing all they could to mitigate the effects of the great calamity which had overtaken the country. It was indeed strange that in a country where there was so much earnest work there was also so much suffering. In the old days famine was easily accounted for as the product of war and misrule, but these evils no longer existed. For forty years there had been peace within the borders of India, yet in that period there had been ten famines, and fifteen millions had died of famine and the diseases incident thereto. The present famine was by far the worst that India had ever seen. There were various reasons for this. It closely followed the famine of 1897; so closely, indeed, that the Natives had only a chance of reaping one bare crop, after the first famine, when the second was upon them. The famine had also been of a very searching character. It was a famine of money, of food, of fodder, and of water. The seed corn of the people had been eaten, their plough cattle were dead, nothing but hopeless misery awaited them. He desired that hon. members should note these things, so that they might realise that the present was not a famine of the ordinary type. It was an extraordinary famine, and if they should see fit to grant relief to India on this occasion it could not be drawn into a precedent. (Hear, hear.) Was there, then, such an emergency as made it desirable that they should help India? He thought there was, and for two reasons. First, the people had reached the end of their resources. They had lost their all, their ornaments, clothing, furniture, the very fittings of their houses had all been sold in order to keep life within their bodies. Their seed corn was gone, their plough cattle were dead. They were bankrupt, their capital and credit had alike passed away. They were poorer and almost as naked as the beasts in their native forests. Second, the Government of India had reached the end of its resources. The noble lord spoke of borrowing powers that were unexhausted. He would not enter into the vexed question of what the debt of India might be. Whether money had been borrowed for productive or unproductive works most of them thought that India had borrowed quite enough, and it seemed a very extraordinary thing for the noble lord to contend that the Government of India could relieve its subjects by plunging them more deeply into debt. (Hear, hear.) This aspect of the case would appeal more to their minds when they remembered that the Government of India was in this matter only the people of India. In this country it would be possible to so arrange a tax that its early incidence at any rate would be upon the wealthy. But the revenue in India was raised from land and salt, and it therefore amounted to this that if there was fresh debt and fresh taxation, the miserably poor would be helping those who were yet more miserable. If they wanted to see the exact position of India, it was only necessary that they should glance at the eloquent appeal sent by the Viceroy to the Lord Mayor of London:—"If the question be asked, Why is Government not able to assume the entire burden, and to dispense with all external aid? no false pride need deter me from giving a frank reply. Government is straining every nerve, is pouring out its money, is shrinking from no obligation, however severe. But over and above this expenditure, which cripples our development in a score of ways, there lies an area of need which, do what we may we can barely reach. This is a field of enormous and almost undiscoverable extent, the margin of which the already over-worked official hardly touches." No words could be more forcible than these. (Hear, hear.) The Government was straining every nerve, pouring out its money, crippling its development in a score of ways, and yet there lay a vast area which it could not reach, a field of enormous and undiscoverable extent the margin of which the official hardly touched. That field was still unoccupied. The Viceroy's appeal had not produced anything like that which might have been expected. The field was still practically untouched and must remain so unless Parliament was willing to step forward and do its part. But now, having seen the emergency, let them consider whether it was reasonable that Parliament should supply the help required. He would give them a few simple reasons why he thought Parliament should. First, he thought they might do it were it for no higher reason than that which actuated ordinary business men in their dealings with their fellows. India was a profitable customer, the fourth best customer that they had in the world. She only came after the United States, France, and Germany. Soon she would be their second best customer. Already India was of more consequence to them commercially than Australasia. Some day she would be of more consequence than all their colonies put together. Now in business life when a good man was embarrassed, his banker and wholesale merchant did not allow him to get crushed. They remembered the profit they had made out of him in the past, they reflected upon the profit they might make out of him in the future, and they were willing in business phraseology to "help the lame dog over the stile." Well England had made a large profit out of India in the past; she hoped to make a large profit out of her in the future; and for these reasons were there no other it was fair that she should help India now. (Hear, hear.) But a much higher policy than this dictated that they should help India. To-day, England was somewhat embarrassed in her foreign affairs. She had trouble in South Africa, trouble in China, trouble on the West Coast of Africa. Who had been the first to help her in these difficulties? Had not India? Indian troops had been the first to face the enemy in South Africa, they would be the first to face the enemy in China. (Hear, hear.) Had hon. members reflected what might have been the position of England to-day had India been disloyal? Had they reflected what might be the position of England at some future crisis were India disloyal? Well, they could not make a country loyal in a moment. They could only win its loyalty by slow degrees, by good government, by a display of good feeling, and by acts of timely generosity. An opportunity for such an act was offered to England now. He knew something of India and believed that Indians were about the most grateful people on earth. Let them seize this opportunity and it would make India loyal for many years. For a quarter of a century men would tell their children how when famine and pestilence walked hand in hand through the country, when the seed corn was gone, and the plough cattle were dead and nothing remained for the people but to die, the Sirkar sent a great gift, and bought new seed corn, and new plough cattle, and restored happiness and prosperity to their homesteads. (Hear, hear.) There was one reason why England should help India which needed to be impressed upon the House. Some parts of the speech of the noble lord might have given hon. members the impression that India lacked the spirit of independence in financial matters. He thought that was a most false impression if it existed. The fact was that India was the most independent part of the British Empire. (Hear, hear.) India had cost them nothing in the past. Their Colonies had cost them hundreds of millions, but the British Empire in India had been acquired, extended, and consolidated by the resources of India, and the British Treasury had rarely been asked to subscribe a single shilling to any Indian purpose whatever. (Hear, hear.) Moreover, India cost them nothing at present. Their Colonies cost them a great deal. The difference between the Colonies and India could be realised in a moment by contrasting the India and the Colonial Offices. It was not easy to get up a debate on India because there were no Indian estimates. The expense of the India Office from the salary of the noble lord down to that of the meanest employé was paid for by the Indian peasant. It was far otherwise with the Colonial Office, the expenses of which from the salary of the Colonial Secretary downward were paid by the British taxpayer. (Hear, hear.) If they looked at the matter more widely the contrast was even more striking. The noble lord at the head of her Majesty's Government had made a speech some days ago in which he spoke of the burden of empire and said that the day might come when that burden would have to be more evenly divided amongst those who were interested in bearing it. When that day came India had nothing to fear for she was already bearing her full share. The Colonies paid towards the Imperial defence in all 1½ millions, whilst India paid about 20 millions. Besides this there had been many wars of which India had borne the cost either in whole or in part though the Colonies had contributed nothing. Their rich colonists had gone free whilst the poorest and most miserable peasantry in the world had been taxed not only for their own welfare but in order to maintain the power and supremacy of the British name in two continents. It might be as the noble lord indicated that India had received strict justice while the Colonies had been treated with foolish generosity. He would not enter into that question, but would ask members whether, seeing that India had stood shoulder to shoulder with England and borne the heat and burden of the day, it was not fitting that England should stand shoulder to shoulder with India in this her hour of trial. (Cheers.) But were he so inclined he might go much farther and prove both from the report of the Commission on Indian Expenditure, and from the

evidence of men of undoubted authority, that this was not really a question of generosity but that it was a question of strict justice —(hear, hear)—a question of equity and fair treatment. Britain owed a debt to the Indian peasant, a debt of which the five millions for which they asked were but a payment on account. (Hear, hear.) In conclusion he would say that, in his opinion, their national dignity demanded that they should help India. They had taken a great responsibility upon themselves with regard to that country. They held 300,000,000 of their fellow creatures in the hollow of their hand. They governed them as they liked, rarely even asking their advice in high matters of State. Though therefore they were not responsible for the famine, which was the act of God, they were responsible for seeing that the calamity was lightened to the people by every means in their power. Moreover they had vaunted their government of India in the ears of the world. They had said "See how Englishmen can govern," and the world was looking on to-day. (Hear, hear.) The miseries of so many of their fellow-subjects therefore touched their honour, and were a blot upon the fair name of their empire. Nor had this thing been done in a corner. The Viceroy's appeal had gone far and wide and had elicited response from the United States, from Germany, the Colonies, even Turkey and China. Only the British House of Commons had refrained from sending any help to the Famine Fund, and should this motion be negatived it might go down to history that the greatest famine of the century was allowed to eat itself out and pass away without any help from the legislative assembly of the richest empire the world has ever seen. Surely such a conclusion would be to their everlasting shame. (Hear, hear.) He could not believe that the Government meant to put so much discredit upon the nation. Rather did he hope that they would acquiesce in what he believed to be the desire of the House and the country and send from their fulness and abounding wealth such a gift to India as would strengthen the hands of an admirable Viceroy and gladden the hearts of a suffering people. (Cheers.)

Sir W. Wedderburn.

Sir W. Wedderburn, who rose to second the motion, said: Mr. Speaker, I trust that the House will favourably consider this appeal to its pity. When the proposal for a Parliamentary free grant was discussed last April, it was received with favour by hon. members on both sides of the House, but the Government did not then see its way to take any action. The First Lord of the Treasury recognised the terrible distress of India, and was prepared if needful to apply without hesitation to Parliament for assistance, but he did not accede to our request, as the Government of India did not then anticipate difficulty in providing relief. It will be seen that this refusal was conditional; and I submit that since April things in India have become much worse, and that the time has come to reconsider the original decision. (Hear, hear.) I hope also that when I make clear the purpose for which we ask the grant the objection taken by the First Lord may in some measure be removed. He pointed out that the Indian revenues sufficed to provide the relief undertaken by the Indian Government. We quite understand that; and we do not propose that the Parliamentary grant should go as an addition to the Indian revenue. (Hear, hear.) On the contrary, we wish the Parliamentary grant to go to the famine-stricken people by way of charity in ways altogether outside the scope of ordinary Government relief. Our object will become clear if the House will consider the Famine Code rules which distinguish by a broad line between the relief functions of the Indian Government on the one hand and the functions of charity on the other. These rules were summarised in a Memorandum sent last April by the Secretary of State to the Lord Mayor at the time the Mansion House Fund was opened. In this Memorandum the noble lord stated first the duties undertaken by Government. He said that "the Government undertakes to prevent death, and to relieve misery from famine in British India at the cost of the Indian Treasury, so far as organisation and effort can accomplish these ends." And he then proceeded to specify the four purposes for which charity was required: these were (1) extra comforts in the shape of food and clothing; (2) the maintenance of orphans; (3) the relief of specially helpless classes, and (4) the provision of cattle, seed-corn and implements to enable the cultivators to make a fresh start. This division of labour was in accordance with the recommendations of the Famine Commissioners, the functions of the Government being limited to the preservation of life and health, while charity was expected to supplement this work in certain exceptional cases, while devoting itself principally to the duty of giving the cultivators a fresh start in life. Now in 1897 the charitable contributions were very large, so that no less a sum than three quarters of a million sterling could be allotted out of the charity fund for cattle, seed-grain and implements. It thus resulted that in 1897 the duties undertaken by Government and the duties undertaken by charity were both sufficiently fulfilled. But this unhappily is not the case in 1900. As regards the duties undertaken by Government, we know, from the assurance of the First Lord, that the Indian Government have the necessary funds and no help is required. But as regards the relief dependent upon charity the resources are altogether insufficient, and it is here that special and exceptional help is required most urgently. (Hear, hear.) I would specially invite the attention of the House to the almost despairing appeal made by Lord Curzon to the world's charity on May 28. In that appeal he pointed out how vastly greater the present famine is than that of 1897, both in extent and intensity, while up to date only about half the amount previously subscribed had come in. This cry for help has been answered from many quarters of the globe; from our own Colonies, some of whom have voted parliamentary grants, from the United States, from the Emperor of Germany—even from the Mandarins of China, and the Sultan of Turkey. Under these circumstances it does not seem fitting that this Parliament, which represents the richest community in the world, should stand aloof and refuse a contribution proportioned to the wealth of this country, and its responsibility for the welfare of the Indian people. (Cheers.) As far as I can judge there is in the country no unwillingness to make this free grant. On the contrary expressions of public opinion seem all to be in its favour, and I brought specially to the notice of the noble lord the Memorial in support of a free grant from so important a public body as the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. As regards the purposes of this free gift, I would repeat that we do not desire it to be used in support of the general finances of India. It should be placed at the disposal of the Viceroy, to be utilised according to the local needs of the suffering provinces, in helping the prostrate cultivators to their feet, and giving them a chance of regaining their normal condition. (Hear, hear.) The excessive need in the present case has arisen from the wholesale destruction of plough and milch cattle by the drought, the loss amounting to 80 and 90 per cent. in some districts. Without plough cattle the cultivators cannot take advantage of the rains now falling, and so pressing is the need that the Government of India is making advances to the cultivators for this purpose exceeding a million sterling. But this relief will only be partial and temporary, for these loans are only made to those who can give security, and as they must be repaid, the object of giving the cultivators a fresh start will not be accomplished. What is wanted is a free gift of cattle, seed, and implements to all who desire to return to their village homes and regain their old position of skilful and industrious peasants. (Hear, hear.) The noble lord has told the House how devotedly the officials in India have worked, high and low. I desire respectfully to associate myself in appreciating the noble work that has been done, and would specially mention that from all parts of India communications reach me expressing deep gratitude to his Excellency the Viceroy for his personal exertions. (Hear, hear.) And I would ask whether this House would not be fitly recognising these exertions by placing at Lord Curzon's disposal funds which will enable him to deal promptly and effectually with the misery by which he is surrounded. I see it announced that he is about to visit Gujerat, which is probably the most sorely afflicted province in India; and if the House will bear with me I will read a short extract describing the condition of the people there, as seen by Mr. Vaughan Nash, the Special Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*. "When I look back on the scenes through which I have passed and think of the sum total of human misery, and the despair I have seen on the people's faces, and the ruin this famine has brought on their homes and fields and on their families, I feel it is hopeless to attempt to put into words the agony of India. You see these simple, childlike races, devoted to their homes and their children, made outcasts by the famine and forced to abandon their customs and leave their homes to get a little bread by labour at stone-breaking or earth-carrying. Most poignant of all in the appeal it made to me was the silence and submission with which they bear their trials. In the hospital sheds, where you pick your way between the rows of dying, or out in the burning sun, where mothers are hammering stones with one hand and hugging a child with the other, you rarely hear a complaint. Even the gift of tears seems to have dried up, except among the children, whom you see crying sometimes by the side of a sick mother. Those who know India may be able to tell you what spirit it is that looks out from the eyes of these miserables, broken and quenched as they are, and which keeps them dignified and composed in surroundings that are degrading and horrifying. It seemed to me to be the spirit of a noble people—(hear, hear)—who had won refinement and discipline when our own forefathers were savages, a people we may well be glad to succour and proud to rule, looking out at the wreck of all things, seeing their gods, their homes, their country shrivelling to dust and ashes." No words of mine will add to the pathos of this description. But in asking hon. members to take a merciful view of the present appeal I would remind them that the famine in India is essentially a famine of money, not of food, and that on an average 1½d. a day is sufficient of to keep these poor people from the pangs of death by hunger. (Cheers.)

The Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Sir M. Hicks Beach: I do not think it would be respectful to the House that I who am very little cognisant of the affairs of India should attempt to detain it with arguments on the general subject on an evening when so vast a field has to be debated; but the amendment which has been moved induces me to detain the House for a short time while I express the views of the Government on this subject. It is a subject which commends itself to all our sympathies. All of us must have deeply felt the sufferings in India from this terrible famine; all of us have desired on the ground of that sentiment to which the right hon. member for East Wolverhampton referred to assist India if she needs assistance, even at considerable cost to ourselves. I hope, therefore, that in what I have to say I shall not be considered as in any way approaching this subject merely from the point of view of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But I am bound to say something as Chancellor of the Exchequer, for I am afraid that what my noble friend said in the earlier part of the evening is but too true—that nowadays every one sympathises with expenditure and few people indeed care how that expenditure is to be provided. What are we asked to do by the amendment of the hon. member? It would not have been, I believe, in accordance with our rules that it should have specified any sum as a grant to India in the painful circumstances in which the amendment is submitted, but on the paper we find that the hon. member desires to grant a sum of £5,000,000 to India. Now the speech of the hon. member who made this proposal differed in one very material respect from the speech of the seconder. The hon. member who made this proposal dwelt at some length on the sufferings of the population from taxation; and that view was also taken by the right hon. member for East Wolverhampton, who, I think, suggested to the House that if it had not been for the famine large remissions of taxation would have been made in India; and therefore he argued—though I do not quite see that the argument was justified—that India was over-taxed. I hope hon. members will recollect when they talk so readily about the Imperial Exchequer that the Exchequer is the Exchequer of the United Kingdom and not of the Empire at large; but if it be a question of the power of India to bear taxation for this purpose and the power of the United Kingdom at the present time to make this grant, I think there are some facts which I should like to

place before the consideration of hon. members. We have heard from my noble friend that the surplus of India in the year just closed is £2,800,000. I believe that in the previous year it was £2,600,000; but I have to remind the House that our deficit in the year just closed was nearly £14,000,000, that our estimated deficit in the present year is something like £23,000,000, and that within the last few days additional Estimates to the extent of £13,000,000 have been laid on the Table of the House. It is perfectly clear, therefore, that for our own Imperial objects we are not only not paying our way at the present time, but that we are largely increasing the debt of the country. What does the proposal of the hon. member amount to, and how is this £5,000,000 to be provided? Is it to be provided by English taxation in this country? Increased taxation for this object would be no more possible than it was for the whole of the great expenditure of the war. What we are asked to do, therefore, when we have in the present year and last year added to our debt £37,000,000, and when we may have to add more, is to increase our debt still further for the purpose of granting £5,000,000 to India, the whole net debt of which is no more than £30,000,000. Is it for the relief of India? I speak subject to correction, but I believe that the main suffering from this famine is in the Native States, for the finances of which and for the subjects of which we are in no degree responsible; and therefore it is proposed that either by way of increased debt or increased taxation—probably by way of increased debt—the taxpayers of this country should at such a time as this provide £5,000,000 mostly for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Native States, over whose finances we have no power at all. That is a proposition which appears to me to demand the most careful consideration of any one who has the least regard for the finances of this country. I notice that the hon. baronet who seconded the amendment did not put it on this ground at all. He says, "I do not want to relieve the finances of India or the taxation of India." It is stated that the Indian Government has sufficient means and power to raise money to meet all the exigencies; the hon. baronet put it purely on the ground of charity. His suggestion was that it was a grant we should never miss, and I think the hon. member who made the proposal said it would be a generous gift out of our fulness and abounding wealth to the people of India. I have shown the House the condition of the Exchequer at the present time, and I confess with astonishment that such a proposition should be based on such grounds as these, because it is not as if those who are responsible for the finances of India came to us and the Government of this country, or came to the House of Commons, and said, "We are in a position in which we are unable to provide sufficient means to meet what is required of us; we feel that we require the help of the United Kingdom in this great Indian difficulty; we appeal to you for that help which we think you ought to give us." That would be a request which I should be the last man to disregard; it would be a request which I should feel bound to consider to the utmost of my power, whatever the condition of our finances here; but it is not the proposition we are considering to-night. We have been told by my noble friend, speaking after communication with the Government of India and with the authority of the Council of India, that from their point of view this is not required; and, more, not only that it is not required, but that nothing could be done in the circumstances as they now existed which would be more prejudicial to the future of India than such a grant as is suggested. I think someone said that it would make no precedent, because this is the most serious famine that has ever been. But it would be a most dangerous precedent. Cannot the hon. member see that if there be one duty more than another incumbent on the Government of India it is to provide beforehand for serious famines of this kind? Cannot he see that if we were to relieve once by such a grant as is proposed without asking for it, how much provision for famine does he think they would make in future? The right hon. gentleman opposite felt the force of that argument used by my noble friend, and I would never be responsible for detracting so completely from the responsibility of the Government of India for the thing of all others they ought to care for by the policy they should pursue, the preparations they should make by the machinery of their administrative government, and to impose upon ourselves a burden that they themselves do not ask us to bear.

Sir H. Fowler: You did it in the Afghan war.

Sir M. Hicks-Beach: Why? Because it was the opinion of Parliament of that day that the Afghan war had been undertaken at the instance of the whole Government and against the necessities or requirements of India, and, therefore, in fairness the people of the United Kingdom should pay for it. But this is an entirely different thing from making a grant towards the necessities of the Government and the Indian famine against the wish of the Indian Government themselves. Is it suggested for a moment that we are not doing anything at the present time to assist the Indian Government in matters of finance? The hon. member who made this proposal stated that among the advantages which India had given to the United Kingdom was the advantage that she had lent 22,000 troops for South Africa and China. That no doubt is the case, but we are paying for them. We are relieving India of the whole cost of those troops while they are employed in South Africa and China. Why is it that the people of India maintain an army like every other State? It is required not merely for quiet times but for times of emergency; and this being a quiet time in India she is able, at our request, to spare some Indian troops both for South Africa and for China. We are paying the whole of the cost of those troops, and from my point of view it appears to me that India has some interest in Chinese affairs as well as the United Kingdom. We shall relieve India in this present financial year, I suppose, probably of not less than £3,000,000 by undertaking the cost of those troops in China and South Africa. I do hope that the House will have some regard in this matter, not only to the claims of sentiment and sympathy, but also to the claims of reason and sound finance in India and in this country. The hon. member deprecated India being called upon to meet this famine by borrowing. Why should we who are not responsible be called upon to meet it by borrowing? If the Indian Government comes to us and says that their resources are exhausted, that the future before them is so dark that they do not see their way to meet this terrible calamity without assistance from us, that assistance will be cordially given; but till that request is made I hope the House will support the Government in declining to assent to a proposal which, recommended as it may be by claims of sentiment and sympathy, is in my opinion contrary to reason and the future advantage, not merely of the United Kingdom, but of India itself. (Cheers.)

Mr. J. M. Maclean.

Mr. Maclean said the House had heard from the Chancellor of the Exchequer the real reason that had induced her Majesty's Government to refuse a grant to India—a grant strongly supported by the public feeling of this country. (Cheers.) This was a time, the right hon. gentleman told them, of great pressure on the finances of the United Kingdom, and of great prosperity for the finances of India. But was any true comparison to be drawn between the two countries—between the resources and the taxation of this country and the extreme pressure of taxation on the miserable Indian peasant? (Hear, hear.) He confessed he was surprised to hear the right hon. gentleman say that no appeal for help had been made to this country by India. Why had no appeal been made? Why had Lord Curzon scoured the world in the hope of getting charity and never appealed to her Majesty's Government? Was it not plain he had received a hint from her Majesty's Government that an application of that kind was not desired—(cheers)—that it was not considered proper the Government should be pressed to give a grant at the present moment. (Cheers.) It was said the need had not arisen. He declared that the need had arisen. (Cheers.) He denied that everything had been done that could be done by the Government of India to avert famine. In the last forty years there had been ten recurring famines, which at a moderate estimate had swept away fifteen million human beings. The present famine, he supposed, represented a loss of between two and three millions. He therefore denied that, as said by Sir H. Fowler, the administration of relief had been marked by wonderful success. The first plain duty of the Government of India was to prevent death, while the people of India had been dying by tens of thousands without getting any help from the Government. It was alleged that the people were dying not from famine, but from cholera and fever; but these were merely *aliases* for the real cause of death, which was starvation. The people went to these relief camps, which were pest houses. They had not the means of recovering their strength when they got there, and they fell victims to disease and died rapidly off. (Hear, hear.) This was the real cause of the great mortality. The responsibility lay between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy. Of the Secretary's sympathy he did not doubt, and he concurred in what the right hon. gentleman had said about the admirable way in which a great deal of the work had been done by the Government of India. The staff, however, had not been sufficient to give the people relief. (Cheers.) Directly cholera appeared these great camps should have been broken up, and he contended there was room for the application of Imperial funds and the importation of Imperial officers to help those civil and military servants of the Crown who had been so splendidly doing their duty. (Cheers.) The Government, however, had sat still. The noble lord had waited for the monsoon to break. He had written the inevitable letter to the Lord Mayor which seemed to be the panacea for all the ills that flesh was heir to—(laughter)—and India was so exceedingly well off that instead of presenting money to that country the noble lord was going to accept a gift for a foreign purpose from one of the Indian princes. This gift from the Mahárájá of Gwalior of a hospital ship for China was an illustration of that spurious Imperialism that was spreading like a parasite over the whole of the British Empire—(cheers)—and he thought the Government might, with all politeness, have told the Mahárájá that at this time of terrible suffering he could better employ his money on his fellow-countrymen. (Cheers.) Surely we had had enough of these offers of hospitals from different parts of the world. (Cheers.) England ought to be ashamed to accept such gifts from any country. We were rich enough and strong enough to maintain our own soldiers and sailors, and to refuse the offers of hospitals as free gifts either from enterprising citizens of America who desired honour and social recognition in English society, or from Indian princes who desired to compete with one another for the favour of the Imperial Government. (Cheers, and cries of "Oh.") As to the Indian Government, he was glad to see that the Viceroy—a man of great energy and ability—had taken a step which he ventured to recommend some time ago, and that was that he should himself visit some of the distressed districts. There was no doubt that India under our rule was bleeding to death. The population was mainly agricultural. Their cattle had been swept away, they had not manure for their land, and they could not restore their land to a state of fertility unless a free gift was made. A free gift in the way of charity would not, however, suffice, and the gift should be accompanied by a comprehensive policy, such as was framed long ago by the Government of India on the recommendation of a gentleman who was one of the most distinguished public servants India ever had. When there was a famine over forty years ago Colonel Phayre-Smith, who was equally distinguished by his ability in peace and war, was appointed to report on the subject, and in the result he wrote a most able State paper, in which he recommended that the land assessments should be permanently settled over the whole of the country, and not merely in a few provinces. He converted to his views Lord Canning, the then Viceroy, Lord Lawrence and other distinguished men, and the policy was taken up by Sir Charles Wood, Sir Stafford Northcote, and others, who only failed because the Manchester school at that time foresaw that if land revenue were reduced heavy indirect taxation would have to be levied and a large import duty put on cotton goods. The Indian peasant was virtually rack-rented on his own improvements, for directly he got his head above water, cultivated a certain portion of the land, and got more out of the land, the agent of the State came down upon him and demanded half the net profits of his fields. He held that the remedy of this grievance would be a great policy worthy of the Empire to undertake. (Cheers.)

(The conclusion of the report will appear next week.)

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